

# CAPTAIN STREETER PIONEER

EVERETT GUY BALLARD

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# CAPTAIN STREETER PIONEER

BY

E. G. BALLARD, A.B.

AUTHOR OF "LIBERTY, INDEPENDENCE AND SELF-GOVERNMENT"

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THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED TO THE MEMORY OF  
THAT GREAT PATRIOT AND STATESMAN,  
THE LATE GOVERNOR JOHN P. ALTGELD,  
WHO, SHORTLY BEFORE HIS DEATH, REQUESTED  
THAT IT BE WRITTEN

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*"Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey,  
Where wealth accumulates, and men decay."*

—OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

## PREFACE

In this volume I have sought to give to the youth of the land, and the coming generations as well, a true, connected, and comprehensive picture of pioneer life and all of its old-time customs, which are fast passing from the memory of man. In this sense I hope that I have contributed something of historical and permanent value. I know of no grander or no more typical specimen of the real pioneer than Captain George Wellington Streeter, whose characteristics and life history I have endeavored to relate, and I know of no more formidable adversary to the Dollar Hogs of America, with whom he has grappled and battled at short range for more than a quarter of a century.

I have also sought to bring to light in this book illustrations of the indisputable fact that to accomplish their ends they will violate every law on the statute books, without a single exception. They are conscienceless and inexorable outlaws whose only love is for dollars and luxuries. They have certainly enjoyed their fill, but the day of reckoning is at hand, and the

American people will be as merciless and inexorable in their treatment of such scoundrels and inhuman monsters as any people who have ever lived in the past. The lion is only sleeping, but he will awake. I am going to give him a sharp prod and see what will happen.

EVERETT GUY BALLARD.

Chicago, Ill., September 30, 1913.



# CAPTAIN STREETER, PIONEER

## CHAPTER I

### ANCESTRY

"Get out of there!" shouted in stentorian tones, greeted my ears one fine morning in May as I was strolling aimlessly about over a tract of land familiarly known to every resident of Chicago under the dual title of "Streeterville" and "The District of Lake Michigan."

My eyes sought instinctively the direction from whence came this peremptory injunction to move on, and I saw about a hundred yards distant the gentleman who had thus summarily challenged me. He was a small, wiry-looking man, with red hair and mustache and clean-cut features. Upon closer view I looked into clear blue eyes which never for an instant wavered in their gaze, but which looked me through and through. He seemed to be a man of about sixty, but I learned later that he was past seventy-three years of age.

I had read enough about "Streeterville" and its occupant to know intuitively that I beheld

Captain Streeter, the famous battler of the Chicago lake front. The further fact that he grasped in his hands an old Springfield repeater equipped with a bayonet, which was tilted threateningly in my direction, fully convinced me that my conjecture was correct. I became straightway possessed of the desire to make his acquaintance, so, instead of taking to my heels, I saluted in the most approved military fashion and advanced toward the belligerent gentleman with the red hair.

As soon as I came within speaking distance I opened hostilities by asking him a question: "Is this Captain Streeter?" His answer was prompt and pointed: "It is. What are you doing here?"

Without unnecessary delay I assured the "Captain" that my mission was entirely peaceful; that I did not claim a foot of his territory, nor did I represent anyone who did; and further that I was pleased to make his acquaintance even under such unfavorable auspices.

The "Captain" was mollified at once, and his demeanor underwent a rapid transformation. Cordiality and good humor such as I have rarely seen north of Mason and Dixon's Line beamed from his hitherto rigidly stern countenance. He

quickly advised me that he had been greatly pestered by surveyors who had been stealthily prowling about over his land attempting to make a survey for a fence, and that he had repeatedly chased them away at the point of the bayonet. He had supposed, naturally, that I belonged to their brigade, and he did not intend that I should steal a march on him.

Perceiving, doubtless, that I was in a talkative mood, he invited me to come over to his home, which was a one-story brick structure only a few paces distant. I accepted the invitation, and we were soon seated on settees and deeply engaged in earnest conversation, while our eyes glanced out now and then over the beautiful waters of the lake.

Naturally I was interested to know something of the Captain's claim of ownership to this highly valuable tract of land called Streeterville, in the very heart of Chicago, and the Captain gave me every feature and fact relating thereto without the slightest reserve.

My interest was so aroused by the recital that I was anxious to learn of his birth and ancestry, for I felt sure that such an indomitable spirit did not come of a mean strain of people, but must perforce have sprung from the best

blood of the nation. My surmise was abundantly well founded, as the reader will learn from the graphic story of his life which the "Captain" began on that beautiful May morning and continued from time to time as we met in the days and weeks following our dramatic encounter. I shall endeavor to faithfully reproduce this story in the very language of the "Captain":

\* \* \* \* \*

My father, William Streeter, and my mother, Catharine Marion, were married in Canandaigua, New York, in the year 1832, and in the early days of the Wolverine State, then the Far West of the national domain, they came to the little city of Detroit. Their purpose was to get a start in this new country and grow up with it. They were both of good old Revolutionary stock. My paternal grandfather was a drum major in the War of 1812, and died while playing a drum at a Fourth of July celebration at Pine Run, Michigan, many years later, at the advanced age of one hundred and five years. His father had been a Revolutionary soldier and had been with Washington in all his campaigns.

My mother, with her father and mother, had come from South Carolina, and her maiden name was Marion. They were from the same family

which produced the great revolutionary hero, General Francis Marion, the "Swamp Fox of the South," whose daring deeds and zealous love of liberty will live forever in the hearts of American freemen.

It was General Marion who so loved these priceless principles, for which our forefathers fought, that during the long years of the great conflict he wore across his cap band the immortal words of Patrick Henry, "Liberty or Death"; and he lived and acted up to them. And he was a man of such just and noble character that in his early manhood during wars with the Indians his soul revolted against the orders of his superior officers to burn down the villages and destroy the cornfields of the poor Indians. I have in my possession an old letter written by him to a friend concerning this very matter, which is more than a hundred years old. I feel confident that you will enjoy hearing this letter read, and I shall take the time to read it to you:

"We arrived at the Indian towns in the month of July. As the lands were rich and the season had been favorable, the corn was bending under the double weight of lusty roasting ears and pods of clustering beans. The furrows seemed to rejoice under their precious loads, the fields

stood thick with bread. We camped the first night in the woods, near the fields, where the whole army feasted on young corn, which, with fat venison, made a delicious treat.

"The next morning we proceeded, by order of Colonel Grant, to burn down the Indians' cabins. Some of our men seemed to enjoy this cruel work, laughing very heartily at the curling flames as they mounted loud crackling over the tops of the huts. But to me it appeared a shocking sight. Poor creatures! thought I, we surely need not grudge you such miserable habitations. But when we came, according to orders, to cut down the fields of corn, I could scarcely refrain from tears. For who could see the stalks that stood so stately with broad green leaves and gaily tasseled shocks, filled with sweet milky fluid and flour, the staff of life; who, I say, without grief, could see these sacred plants sinking under our swords with all their precious load, to wither and rot untasted in their mourning fields?

"I saw everywhere around the footsteps of the little Indian children, where they had lately played under the shade of their rustling corn. No doubt they had often looked up with joy to the swelling shocks, and were gladdened when they thought of their abundant cakes for the com-



ing winter. When we are gone, thought I, they will return, and, peeping through the weeds with tearful eyes, will mark the ghastly ruin poured over their homes and happy fields, where they had so often played.

“‘Who did this?’ they will ask their mothers.

“‘The white people did it,’ the mothers reply; ‘the Christians did it!’

“Thus for cursed Mammon’s sake, the followers of Christ have sown the hellish tares of hatred in the bosoms even of pagan children.

“After burning twenty towns, and destroying thousands of cornfields, the army returned to Koewee, where the Little Carpenter, a Cherokee chief, met Colonel Grant and concluded a peace.”

This same noble character so impressed his love of these sacred sentiments upon a young British officer whom he met to arrange for an exchange of prisoners, that he resigned his commission because he thought it useless to fight men who loved liberty with such a burning passion. Being invited to dine, he found that the bill of fare consisted solely of baked sweet potatoes served on pieces of bark, with a log for a table. Perceiving also that the majority of Marion’s men were almost naked and barefooted, and that the General himself was but poorly clad, he

could not refrain from commenting upon such a life. When he learned in addition to this that Marion served without pay, he was astounded. The General answered him:

"Why, sir, these things depend on feeling. The heart is all; and, when that is much interested, a man can do anything. Many a youth would think it hard to indent himself a slave for fourteen years; but let him be over head and ears in love, and with such a beauteous sweetheart as Rachael, and he will think no more of fourteen years' servitude than young Jacob did.

"Well, now, this is exactly my case. I am in love; and my sweetheart is Liberty. Be that heavenly nymph my companion, and these wilds and woods shall have charms beyond London and Paris in slavery. To have no proud monarch driving over me with his gilt coaches, nor his host of excisemen and taxgatherers insulting and robbing me; but to be my own master, my own prince and sovereign, gloriously preserving my national dignity, and pursuing my true happiness; planting my vineyards, and eating their luscious fruits; sowing my fields, and reaping the golden grain; and seeing millions of my brothers all around me, equally free and as happy as myself, this, sir, is what I long for."



The officer replied that, both as a man and as a Briton, he must certainly subscribe to this as a happy state of things.

"Happy!" exclaimed Marion; "yes, happy indeed! and I had rather fight for such blessings for my country and feed on roots, than keep aloof, though wallowing in all the luxuries of Solomon; for now, sir, I walk the soil that gave me birth, and exult in the thought that I am not unworthy of it. I look upon these venerable trees around me, and feel that I do not dishonor them. I think of my own sacred rights, and rejoice that I have not basely deserted them, and when I look forward to the long ages of posterity, I glory in the thought that I am fighting their battles. The children of distant generations may never bear my name; but still it gladdens my heart to think that I am now contending for their freedom and all its countless blessings."

Of this liberty-loving ancestry came William Streeter and Catherine Marion, and their children imbibed a deep love for the noble deeds of their forebears, which was destined to play an important part in their lives as will be seen before my story is ended.

My father, William Streeter, first bought a tract of land in Washtenaw County, not far from

Detroit, but lived there only a few months. After selling this he purchased one hundred and sixty acres of land which is now entirely covered by the southeast portion of the city of Flint, Mich.; also, a larger tract of three hundred and forty acres sixteen miles north of Flint, near the present town of Montrose. Both were located on the Flint River, a beautiful stream flowing through a dense forest of virgin timber which nature had been hundreds of years in making. He was the seventh citizen of Flint, where he lived for about two years; then moving to the larger tract of land.

At that time this portion of the Wolverine commonwealth was a dense forest of the wildest description, for lumberjacks had not yet penetrated its fastnesses with their saws, axes and other logging paraphernalia. Many years elapsed before their advent. The air was redolent with the healthful odor of the balsam and the pine, and everywhere life was free and undisturbed. No smoke, dust, or din of the city palled upon the eye or ear. It was indeed the primeval forest, inhabited alone by wild animals and the red men, of whom there remained a numerous band in their native village of Peanakewink, three miles down the Flint River. These Indians were a

peaceful tribe given over to no greater passions than the hunting of wild animals and the spearing of fish, while their squaws industriously raised the corn and beans, and prepared the game for the feast of their lordly braves upon their return from the day's hunt. To the squaws fell the task of dressing the skins of the animals, and the making, from the hides, of the clothing, moccasins, and sundry other useful and indispensable articles. Since the Indians had made a treaty with the white men, they did not look upon their coming with any alarm or spirit of unwelcome. In fact, the presence of each under these conditions was in many ways a positive help to the other.

My father found time not only to clear and till portions of his lands, but, as becomes the truly progressive and energetic citizen, to seek other fields of endeavor which might tend to help his fellows and improve and upbuild the commonwealth. He constructed the first bridge across the Flint River, and entered into a contract to build a state road from Flint to Saginaw about the year 1842. This contract he carried out in all its terms and specifications. At that time this was a herculean task, for the route lay through great forests, across dangerous and almost

impassable swamps, and large and swollen streams, and he had no machinery and no engineering equipment at hand to assist him in the task. There was naught but the saw, the axe, the shovel, and the ingenuity and strength of man to accomplish the task; and they triumphed.

Shortly thereafter, as the traffic upon the Great Lakes increased, he found ample time during the winter season, when in those days courts were generally in session, to develop into a marine lawyer of ability, trying cases of importance in all the Federal courts at that time in the State.

This, together with the fact that there were no schools near his farm in the wilderness on the Flint River, necessitated his living with his family in the town of Flint during the winter. During his latter years he retired entirely to his farm, where he lived amidst an abundance of the good things of life, honored and respected by his fellow citizens as one who had indeed lived to aid and bless his kind.

To my father and mother were born eleven children, all living to manhood and womanhood, and ten of them reaching fifty years of age. Their names were James, Henry, Francis, George Wellington, Susan Ann, Jay, Marion, May Douglas, Ellen, Laura, and Chauncey. It was truly a

pioneer family. The children grew up speedily and heartily, and soon aided their parents in the development of the tract of land that finally came to be known as the "home place." They were all good boys and girls who were trained, as all boys and girls were in that day, to become useful and industrious citizens of the great Republic, which was then bracing itself to meet the fierce war storm that was then gathering in the South; and it was just such sons and daughters as these who were to bear the burden and the sorrows of the conflict, and right nobly they did their part.

## CHAPTER II

### CHILDHOOD AND PIONEER LIFE

My earliest recollections are of my grandmother Marion rocking and singing to me as I sat upon her lap. I was about two years of age, and my grandfather and grandmother Marion, then very aged, were living with our family. I recall very distinctly the lines of a straggling verse which my grandmother sang to me many times, and which ran like this, if my youthful memory is to be trusted:

“This wilderness was our abiding place  
Some forty years ago;  
For fish we used the hook and line,  
And with the gun we shot the buck or doe;  
On Johnny cake our ladies dined  
Some forty years ago;  
We pounded corn to make it fine  
In this new countrie some forty years ago.”

This is my very first recollection of song and poetry, and almost my first recollection of any-

thing. My grandmother did not live many months after this, and I recall her death very vividly. I was sitting on her lap, with her arms about me, and she was rocking me and singing to me, when she suddenly let me fall to the floor. Mother ran to me and then discovered that grandmother had passed away, presumably of old age. All efforts to resuscitate her were fruitless. She was at that time past one hundred years of age, while I was about two and one-half years old.

Another early recollection is of the trip the family made in moving from the farm to the town of Flint during the first winter that we spent there after moving to the farm for the earlier part of the year. I remember that I sat with my mother on a wagon load of household goods and that my uncle led the yoke of oxen which drew the load. Mother held my baby sister in her arms, and when we came to a piece of corduroy road which ran through a swamp, the wagon jolted me so that I cried, and my uncle had to lift me down. Then I walked along on the ends of the logs, of which the corduroy was built, much after the fashion of ties on a railroad track, but much closer together. It grew quite dark before I got to the end of this



log road, and I got very sleepy before we reached Flint at about nine o'clock at night.

An incident which was impressed very firmly upon my childish mind occurred shortly after this, while we were living in Flint, which, at that time, was a mere hamlet. The Indian village of Pe-an-e-ka-wink was situated a few miles down the Flint River and contained more than three hundred inhabitants. These Indians were accustomed to pass through Flint on their way to Detroit, when they went, according to treaty, to draw their regular rations and supplies from the Government.

At that time, I was less than three years of age. There was then only one little store and tavern combined in Flint, and this was kept by a man named Decker, who was in fact the first white settler in Flint, and consequently its founder. We lived just across the road from his hostelry, and the Indians always stopped there while going to and fro. In fact, they obtained a little "fire water" there to keep up their spirits on the long trip to Detroit, which at that time could be reached only by following a trail through the woods.

On this particular occasion the squaws ranged their little papposes alongside the tavern and



went within to share the hospitality of friend Decker along with their husbands. Now, friend Decker had among his possessions a large white porker of the feminine gender, which was never kept within a pen or other inclosure, but ran about the premises and out into the timber at her own sweet will. On this day she happened along shortly after the squaws had ranged their Indian babies in their birch-bark pockets beside the tavern wall, so she at once attacked and killed the smallest baby she spied, who, of course, was perfectly helpless, and made little outcry. I viewed the tragic scene from across the road, and being too small to interfere, I ran into the house and reported the situation to my mother, who came too late to save the baby's life, but early enough to prevent the entire disappearance of the body of the infant.

Of course, the Indians within were duly advised of the tragic death of one of their number, and the poor mother and the entire band set up a loud wailing and weeping which very much disconcerted friend Decker, who was much puzzled as to how he might make the matter right with his Indian friends and customers. He finally proposed that they should have the body of the porker if they could catch her. This proposition

## *Captain Streeter, Pioneer*

s immediately accepted by the Indians, and the squaws ran the sow down in the dense woods, killed her as soon as caught, and then cut her up into small pieces which were duly distributed among the band. Then they proceeded on their way to Detroit as though all were thoroughly satisfied.

In those days very few of the Indians possessed guns, and an old flintlock gun would buy a choice eighty-acre tract of land from any Indian. Guns were very valuable and useful articles just at that time. Wild animals of every description were on every hand, and no household could afford to be without one gun at least. Bear, deer, moose, wolves, wild cats, lynx, panther, raccoon, and many other smaller animals abounded everywhere. I have seen great numbers of deer, and moose trotting through the woods and crossing the river on many occasions. Often I saw the Indians with nothing but bow and arrows and dogs kill a deer or elk along their runways in the deep forests. As a boy I often hunted with the young squaws and Indian boys.

Bears were very troublesome when I was a small boy, and we could sometimes at night hear them turning over the swill barrel; but they would skip away before we could get out of

the house and after them. Often they would steal a hog or a sheep, so that we always shut these animals up at night in pens near the barns. But even that did not always save them, for a bear would sometimes kill one and carry it out of the pen. On one occasion I remember that we heard a pig squealing during the night. Father grabbed the gun and ran for the pen, and we after him. So busily engaged was Mr. Bear that he did not hear us approach, and father was able to put the muzzle of the gun almost against the head of the animal before he fired. The bear, a big black fellow, dropped over dead, and piggie was saved, all by his ability to squeal at the right time.

Bears dearly loved honey, and would take almost any sort of risk to rob a bee hive. During such a proceeding the bees never seemed able to make any sort of an impression on the bears. We caught many a bear robbing our hives on bright moonlight nights, and while greedily devouring the honey they would utter a sound which very much resembled "um, um, um."

I was about fourteen years of age when I killed my first bear, and felt that I had won my first real spurs. There was a big spring in the woods near the river, over which a big plum thicket

hovered, and a trail led from a field down to this spring.

I was coming down this trail approaching the spring and, looking over a big log, I saw a bear, which stood up on its hind legs to get a better view of me. I pulled the trigger just as his head came up over the log, and then took to my heels. I ran all the way home and hailed my brother Henry with the shout, "I have killed a bear!" but I did not know, in fact, whether I had or not. We then loaded up the gun and hurried back to the vicinity of the log, where we found that I had indeed killed a bear. My bosom swelled with pride at the thought of what I had done, and I considered myself a budding Nimrod or Daniel Boone. At that time, of course, I had no apologies to make to Colonel Roosevelt, who came on the scene of action much later.

Wolves were so numerous in those days that pigs and lambs disappeared with great regularity. About the only protection from these depredations was to get the little ones inside the barn, for the wolves are night marauders in a new country, and very bold and impudent. We often caught them in traps and pitfalls, and finally when the state paid a bounty for the pelts, we were

aided greatly in thinning their ranks in the more populous districts.

I remember one occasion, when all of the wild animals were virtually forced out of the woods by a big forest fire which swept the country for miles around and destroyed the tamarack swamps, which at that time were very dry. These swamps were devastated of timber which had been so thick that one would get lost in it, although they were usually only about a mile in width and a couple of miles in length. The fire burned down into the earth to a depth of from ten to fifteen feet; in fact, the fire continued burning in the boggy ground for a period of two months. This left great depressions in the earth, which later became filled with surface water and formed lakes. These lakes are in existence today, and some of them are utilized for pleasure resorts.

Fortunately the fire did not burn out the big forests, but it filled them with smoke, and the animals who lived there were compelled to flee to escape suffocation. They fled to the streams, and would stand for hours on the shallow rapids. Sometimes they got on islands in the river. Deer, elk, moose, bear, lynx, panthers, wolves, and many other animals were to be seen along the river in great numbers, and they became unusually

tame, quite often hovering near our home, which they would frequent at night, seeking whatever they could find. I noticed also that multitudes of big fish, pickerel and muskallonge, some of them three or four feet long, were affected by the smoke and would float over the rapids lying on their backs, where we could wade in and catch as many as we liked. Bears and wolves also went into the fishing business, and with good success, since the fish were extremely sluggish and inert. If one got away from you the first time you tackled him, you could follow him and grab him when he came to the surface wrong side up the next time.

Grass and browse of every description were burned out of the woods, and the elk, deer, and moose were obliged to stay along the streams and lakes, where a fringe of vegetation yet remained. These were happy hunting days for the red men, who were not a bit slow to take due advantage of the situation, which illustrates again the truth of the old saying that "its an ill wind that blows nobody good."

Pheasants, wild turkeys, ducks, wild geese, and wild pigeons were very numerous in my boyhood days, the two former in the woods and the three latter along the streams and lakes.



Hunting pheasants and wild turkeys was a very agreeable and sometimes an exciting pastime. The turkeys could often be captured in big flocks if their roosting places were discovered. When we were fortunate enough to find one of these roosts we prepared to make a night raid upon it. In the light of a torch, the turkeys could see nothing, and were perfectly helpless. We could knock them over with clubs and poles, and if some of them flew off the roosts they were sure to fly against trees and come to grief. We could then pounce upon them, and only a few of the flock ever got away.

Wild pigeons, like ducks and geese, came by the millions and infested the rivers and lake regions. They would build their nests in the swamps, and I have seen as many as fifty nests in one bunch. In the fall they would congregate together in vast numbers, millions of them forming one great flock miles in length, and then at night they would settle down to a chosen roosting place, where they could be killed by the wagon load if you wished to do so, in the same manner that we got the wild turkeys. I have also killed them in the evening when they were flying low over the brow of a hill or over a lake. I remember on one occasion, at Bald Eagle Lake,

that I got to the shore just as myriads of them came streaming over the brow of a hill. I knocked down all that we needed for a big feast with a small tamarack fishing pole. In a boat or canoe you could push along the rivers and lakes amidst the wild rice and reeds, and kill all the wild duck and geese that you wished to carry home with you.

In those days we could kill deer, elk or moose whenever we chose without molestation. No game wardens disturbed our operations. Venison in some form was a regular dish on the home menu card. Venison pot pie, steaks, roasts, mince meat, dried venison, venison with succotash—say, they had the packing-house products thrown into the discard. It makes an old man's mouth water just to ruminate over the good grub that mother used to serve out of the wild game that was as common then as flowers in May. Those were indeed happy days for hunting!



## CHAPTER III

### PIONEER CO-OPERATION

There were other employments in which profit and pleasure were combined, and in which the labor detracted little from the pleasure, at least as I see it now after the lapse of many years.

One which comes vividly to mind is the "sugar-making" days of springtime. How many of the youngsters of today know anything about the process by which maple sugar and syrup were made in the very heart of the forest, or dream of the wholesome fun we extracted along with the syrup? For their benefit I will endeavor to give at least an outline of the *modus operandi* in this almost lost art. To be sure there are a few camps yet remaining, but most of them are not the genuine article. They adulterate the output and spoil the whole performance.

Our place of operation was called a "sugar camp," and we certainly lived up to the name. We were, in fact, obliged to camp right on the ground from the moment operations began until the close of the season.

During the winter we were usually engaged for a good portion of the time in preparing for the business, or "run," in the spring. We cut an abundant supply of wood to be used in boiling down the sap; for maple sugar and maple syrup are made from the sap extracted from the sugar maple by a process called "tapping the tree." This consisted simply of boring a small hole in the tree a few feet above the ground, and inserting a "spile" or little spigot, which carried off the sap and allowed it to drip into a trough set on the ground directly under this spile. I am not speaking now of the new-fangled sugar camp, nor of the apparatus now in vogue. I am talking of the real old-fashioned sugar camp of my boyhood days, and of the methods which then prevailed.

When we first opened our camp we selected a site that was thickly set with sugar trees as a matter of course, for a good part of the work lay in hauling the sap to the kettles, where it was boiled down. Then we cut enough three-foot lengths of nice clear pine trees about a foot in diameter. We split these as near the middle as possible, and then scooped out the inside, so that we had little troughs out of each cut, which would hold, as a rule, a pail and a half



Chicago Harbor as Streeter Found It in 1861



of sap. This we emptied into barrels and hauled on a sled to two great storage troughs. These were made by cutting two giant pines, from four to five feet in diameter, and from thirty to forty feet in length, hollowing them out with an axe and adze until they formed great troughs or tanks holding many barrels of sap. These were kept filled, their supply running into the kettles where the boiling down process was going on.

This latter process was accomplished by building up a sort of furnace of brick or clay on which the kettles were set on holes made for them. There was also a "stirring-off" pan at one end, where the syrup was run off and boiled until nearly ready to sugar. It was then transferred to the proper kettle for that purpose. At one end of this furnace the wood was thrown in and the fire kept going; at the other end was a chimney which furnished the necessary draft and an exit for the smoke. All this was in the open air without a covering of any kind or character.

This was the old-time maple sugar and maple syrup apparatus. In the later days they built commodious houses over them for shelter, convenience, and cleanliness. In my day, however, the only shelter we had was built along one side of this boiling-down paraphernalia. The con-

trivance was made by driving into the ground the necessary distance apart two wooden forks having a height of about six or seven feet, so placed that a pole laid across them would be parallel with the furnace. Against the farther side of this pole we stood up boards at an angle of about forty-five degrees, so that the lower end would be on the ground while the upper end rested against the pole. This left the front toward the furnace open. The heat kept this one-sided shelter warm at night, and everything under it dry. On the ground beneath it we spread a good thickness of straw, and over this buffalo robes, bear and deer skins, and thus made a very comfortable bed.

Do not get the idea into your head that when bed-time came around we all lay down and snoozed until morning. This is far from the truth. Few of us got even a nap before eleven o'clock, and then we took turns looking after things and sleeping. Bear in mind that the fires had to be kept going every minute, and the sap kept boiling down and skimmed of dirty-looking foam right along, and prevented from running over. Sap had always to be gathered and hauled in, so there would be no diminution of the supply, if the establishment was to be run

at full capacity. And this continuous performance usually lasted about four weeks, beginning, as a rule, around the first of February.

After the syrup became properly thickened, all that was necessary to make it turn into sugar was to keep stirring it, and crystallization once started, did the rest. It was then turned into molds shaped like small cakes, hence the name "sugar cakes." To make syrup so much boiling down was unnecessary, and no stirring was needed after a certain stage in the boiling-down process.

The much-talked about "stirring-off" days were those days when a quantity of the boiled down sap or syrup had reached the proper state for crystallization; or "stirring off" or "sugaring off," as some called it. These were the days or nights, as the case might be, of real fun. Friends were nearly always invited in. Men, women, and children, and even the dogs, came from far and near, and good wholesome fun and wit abounded in the light of the camp-fire until a late hour. A goodly bit of the syrup was made into taffy and "pulled" until it had the supposedly right degree of whiteness. It was then distributed to all persons present. Even the dogs were not forgotten; but they never seemed to relish the product quite as well as the boys and girls. The

candy stuck in their teeth, and they would roll over on the ground, and in the bushes, and try to dig it out with their paws, sometimes whining and howling for help.

The fresh "sugar cakes" were always a great treat, and really it was astounding the amount of sweetness the average boy or girl could get away with on such an occasion.

The "wax" was also appreciated. This was nothing more than the syrup boiled down to a waxy consistency, and eaten without being "pulled," as was the case when "taffy" was the desired product.

The clarifying agent used in producing sugar and syrup was a liberal amount of "slippery elm" bark, the sticky inside of the bark being placed in the bottom of the stirring-off kettle. To this all the sediment adhered, and left the sugar and syrup beautifully clear and clean.

I venture to assert there was no experience of pioneer life that was productive of more fun and unadulterated pleasure than the good old days of "sugar making." The beautiful woods and firelight cast a certain amount of glamor over the entire transaction; and nothing was more palatable than the product when spread over the steaming buckwheat cakes our mothers used to



serve on frosty mornings. Why, this whole tale of those olden golden days simply makes an old man's mouth water with an appetite that no modern bill of fare can ever appease. Even gold hunting, fascinating though it may be, is not to be compared with sugar making.

Then, those were grand opportunities for "sweethearting" among the older boys and girls. Yes, I speak from experience. Many a happy love match was sealed on the road to and from the trail to an old time "sugar camp." Under the spreading boughs of the giants of the forest the avowal and betrothal of many a sweet young couple took place. Cupid was just as active in those days, and far more accurate in his archery than he is in these latter days. He more often meant business, and was not so much inclined to playfulness and foolishness without genuine purpose as he is today. He rarely missed the mark in those days. Wealth, reputation, and social prestige did not bother his aim or dim his sight as they do now. In fact these considerations did not enter into the transaction; and divorces were almost an unknown occurrence. Reno was not on the map, and friendly courts and legislatures had not yet turned their activities to these fields of human

experience. They had no occasion to do so. What a pity they ever conceived the idea that such a necessity existed.

There was another experience which was highly interesting and decidedly profitable to the pioneer farmer and his youthful sons, and to which the youth of today is a total stranger. This was the "log rolling" of the "settler," not that of the politician, of whose tricks and doubtful practices we hear too much in these days. He was an unknown character in the early days; and since we had never made his acquaintance, we did not note his absence. In the light of recent revelations, and the great revolution of popular thought and sentiment on the subject, it would seem that his days of active operation were about finished, and that the will of the people, whatever it may be at any particular time, shall now be supreme, rather than that of the money-bag contingent whose paid mouth-piece and manipulator he is always found to be when you trail him to his lair.

The settler, after having first cut down his timber and the brush standing on the tract which he wished to cultivate (a task which was indeed fraught with months of arduous labor on his part and that of his sons) usually found the

greater portion of the land covered with giant logs and piles of brush, the latter accumulated not only from the underbrush but from the trimmings of tree tops and millions of twigs and branches. And when we remember that this was the forest primeval, which had been hundreds of years in the making, we can in a measure imagine the picture which such a scene would present.

The problem that faced the settler was how to dispose quickly of these accumulations of brush and logs. There was no adjacent market for the magnificent timber, no roads or railroads to transport it to a market far away, and no mills to convert it into lumber or any useful or valuable product. Consequently the only disposition that could be made of it was to destroy it, and the quickest way in which this could be done was the one to be preferred. Experience had proved that the only agency to bring about the desired result in the shortest possible time was fire, and that the only safe and sure way to apply it was to roll the logs together in enormous piles and heaps, and then apply the torch. In this toilsome way the homesteads of the pioneers were carved out of the forests.

But this was a task too great for the efforts

of one family; so the neighborhood was always invited to assist in the work, and right loyally they ever responded to the call. Every family for miles around, men, women and children, on the appointed day repaired to the cabin of the settler who had invited them; and they did not come empty-handed to the task. They brought their horses and oxen, together with the necessary implements to perform the task, the axe, crowbar, hand-spike, wedge, maul, ropes, and chains; and bright and early in the day the "clearing" teemed as never before in its history with bustle and activity, and with the shouts and commands of these officers of the army of conquering civilization. With might and main they rolled the logs together and piled them in giant heaps, where they lay until the sun and weather had somewhat reduced the sap in them, and made them easier to burn. Then, at his convenience, and at the most opportune time, the settler and his sons applied the torch and watched the great log piles melt away.

And while the men and boys were thus busily engaged in the "clearing," the women and girls were equally busy preparing to appease the appetites of the hungry workers, and they never failed in their task; for the table fairly groaned

with good things to eat. On it were to be found venison roast, venison and succotash, baked pork and beans, roast lamb, baked fish, roast duck, roast partridge, apple butter, wild honey, plum butter, potatoes in every conceivable palatable shape, tomatoes, fresh cheese, corn bread, venison mince, pumpkin, squash, wild grape, elderberry, raspberry, blackberry, cranberry, and blueberry pies; jellies, jams, and preserves made from wild fruits; ginger snaps, cakes, and a host of other delicacies and viands, that only the mind of a loving and experimental pioneer mother could think of, to tickle the palate of the pioneer man. On such occasions as these, native wit, humor and badinage had full play, and song and speech were not infrequently mixed with the feast of the pioneer board.

But this was not the only task where the spirit of brotherly love and neighborly kindness of the pioneer settlement was made manifest, and where the spirit of each-help-the-neighbor solved the big problems of the community. In this day we talk and think much of the co-operative spirit, but those were the days when this spirit really lived, where it blossomed and came to fruition in the growing commonwealths of the West. Never in the history of this nation has there

been such universal co-operation and helpfulness among the entire population as in these days of our pioneer fathers and mothers; and I think I may truthfully say that at no period of our national life has there been such genuinely happy home life, such real contentment and domestic peace, nor such a genuine spirit of unselfishness, such a desire to see every neighbor prosper. Ah, those were the days when men were not greedy, when men were not envious of aught that a neighbor possessed; when true democratic simplicity ruled supreme in the land! In these respects we have never improved our national character, however much we may boast of our material development and achievements.

Another occasion where this spirit was called into action which I must not suffer to be forgotten was the "husking bee." The settler in those days always cut the corn, stock and all, near the ground, and hauled it into the barn, utilizing all of the "fodder" for the feeding of his live stock. The corn with the ears attached was piled high on the barn floor awaiting the hour of husking. The production of corn at that time had not reached an extended stage, and the supply was in fact somewhat limited, when we compare it with modern corn raising methods and areas.



On an appointed evening the invited neighbors would appear, men women and children, ready and willing to assist the neighbor who had invited them to husk his corn. Pine-knot torches safely arranged illuminated the typical log structure with its "puncheon" floor. Usually two champion corn huskers of the community would divide the crowd into two competitive camps; and please bear in mind that this was a task in which all present engaged, men and women, boys and girls. All of them knew how to operate a "shucking peg" so as to bring forth from its yellow envelope the mature ear of corn, and to detach it quickly from the stock.

The champions having duly chosen their respective helpers, a match was on to see which side could husk the most corn, or finish first the task imposed upon it. Quickly and energetically the work progressed, interspersed with good-humored banter and boast, joke and racy story, until one side triumphed over the other, and the task was done.

But while the work proceeded there were many customs and jolly practices that could not be overlooked by the participants. I shall not be able to recount all of them; but one of them, which was productive of the liveliest interest

and the most sport, was a custom which permitted the first boy who found a red ear of corn to kiss the girl who to his youthful fancy seemed most blessed with beauteous looks, or, to use the language of the occasion, the "prettiest girl" present. And he always had the courage of his convictions. He never shirked the duty which the custom imposed. Many a budding romance was thereby revealed to the eyes of the community; and doubtless such occasions frequently afforded the youthful admirer his first "sweet-heart kiss," for, be it said to their eternal credit, the young ladies of that day were rather stingy with such favors, and the "sweethearting" endeavors had progressed to the really serious stage on both sides before Miss Propriety could be persuaded even to think of granting the blissful favor. And I may truthfully say that hearts were just as tender and true in those good old days, in the midst of such crude surroundings, as at any period in the existence of the race—not excepting even the gallant days of "Douglas tender and true."

But the evening's program was far from ended. "Work before pleasure" was their motto, but the fun was never overlooked. After the corn was husked and the champion crowned, re-



freshments in the shape of ginger snaps, pumpkin, mince, and other pies, sweet cider and apple-jack, satisfied the growing desire for food and drink. In the meantime the barn floor was cleared of the corn fodder; then some rural artist who could charm the pioneer ear with the music of his fiddle strings would begin to "tune up" the beloved product of some American Stradivarius, and soon to the inspiring strains of "Money Musk," "Fisher's Hornpipe," "Old Dan Tucker," or some other early favorite, the joyous and nimble feet of youth were flying o'er the puncheon floor.

Late into the night the festive throng enjoyed the simple pleasure, but never too late, for fathers and mothers opened and closed the entire program and assumed the entire responsibility for the entertainment, which was never permitted to reach the excessive stage.

But the "husking bee" was not the only "bee" in the settler's beehive; he had many others, and all of them good ones, too. But all of them did not belong strictly to the male contingent of the community; some of them belonged to the ladies. Of this latter class let us not forget the "quilt-ing bee," when the ladies of the entire community would congregate by invitation at some

household and, during the course of the day, help some good mother or young housewife to finish several quilts before the long winter set in. These quilts were really works of art too, not crazy patchwork as some high-bred ladies of today may imagine. The most beautiful patterns were executed by the needle in the hands of mothers and sweethearts, and formed into articles of beauty and harmony. My recollection is not very good on these patterns, and never was very extensive, but I can remember the "Log Cabin," the "Sea Wave," the "Irish Chain," the "Star," the "Rising Sun," the "Four Patch," and the "Nine Patch," and there were many others which my mind has lost trace of entirely; but this is certainly a representative and typical list of them.

The quilt was a very much prized gift from mother to daughter, or from grandmother to granddaughter, in those days, and some especially choice design finely executed often passed through several generations as an heirloom. I have known grandmothers and mothers to apportion them by will to their children, and the same is true of the beautifully designed and highly prized old woolen "coverlids."

Another "bee" which deserves to be remem-

bered, and one which belonged to the entire community, both male and female, old and young, was the "spelling bee." This was usually held in the school house, a very crude log structure, of which I shall have more to say later on. This "bee" was held at night, and usually consisted of a match between two schools, each contending for the mastery over the other. They would usually stand up on either side of the room, and the teachers would select the words to be spelled from the dictionary or spelling book. When any participant misspelled a word he was obliged to sit down and retire from the contest. Finally only two would remain on the floor, and then the contest became spirited and exciting. At last one of these would misspell a word and the other spell it correctly, or usually would, and thus carry off the laurels for his school. And the victor would not always be from among the big boys and girls; often some boy or girl from ten to fifteen years of age would vanquish all contestants. The spelling bees were productive of the greatest good, inspiring an interest in good spelling, and the pronunciation of words throughout the entire community, and young and old vied with each other in the task of learning to spell every word in Webster's academic dictionary.

During the evening's program there would usually be half an hour's intermission, or "recess," as it was called, and during this interval the young people became better acquainted with each other, and engaged in the harmless games and sports prevailing in those days.

Another custom which then prevailed illustrates very clearly the spirit of the times. If there happened to be a poor old widow in the neighborhood, or a family where the only male member was sick, the men and boys of the community would congregate at their home and spend a day in cutting wood for them, usually furnishing them with a supply ample to last through the entire winter.

Then there were the "school days," which must not be overlooked. The school house was always a log structure, rather longer than wide, with a big fireplace built in one side of it, large enough to take in sticks of wood six feet in length. Its light would diffuse a ruddy glow throughout the room.

Our desks and seats were not a bit like the modern article. For desks we had thick adzed and hand-planed puncheons laid upon wooden pegs driven in auger holes in the logs, along each side of the walls of the room. Our seats

were merely slabs supported by legs or pegs driven into auger holes bored in the under side of the slabs. There were neither backs nor cushions on the seats, and thus we sat on the rough boards ranged around the walls of the log structure.

There were only about three months of school during the entire year and we made the most of it, learning how to "read, write and cipher" with the best of them, and something of geography, grammar and history as well. Our teachers in those days always believed in the use of birch and hickory oil to persuade boys and girls to live up to the rules of the school, and few escaped chastisement, or "lickings" as we called them, during our school-day career. But, as a matter of fact, our teachers meant everything for our good, and we usually enjoyed the pleasantest relations. At Christmas time the teacher was accustomed to treat the school to real candy, or if not at that time, then on the last day of school. This had a natural tendency to cement our friendship, and we could in consideration of such amenities forgive and forget any fancied grievance.

There was a novel custom in vogue in those days regarding the entertainment and lodging

of the "schoolmaster," as he was called, which would seem highly interesting, no doubt, to the youth of today. Our schoolmaster was paid thirty dollars per month and "boarded round," by which term was meant that the master was given his board and lodging by the patrons of the school in addition to his salary. This meant that every family sending children to school was expected to maintain open house to the schoolmaster at some period of the school term. In some respects this was not a bad idea, since it afforded the teacher and parents ample opportunity to become thoroughly acquainted, and enabled a master to observe the home life and conditions of all his pupils, which the modern schoolmaster seldom has opportunity of doing. In this respect at least he is decidedly at a disadvantage with his predecessor of pioneer days.

Pioneer homes were not furnished with the assortment we are now familiar with, and it may be of interest to mention a few of the details.

All the heating of the log houses was done by means of fireplaces. These were built at one end of the house, and were indeed monstrous affairs, some of them being wide enough to take in sticks of wood and logs eight feet in length. To build a fire a very large log called the "back



log" was placed in the very back of the fireplace. Split sticks were then laid on andirons in front of this back log, and small sticks, shavings and punk put immediately underneath and in front of them. To kindle the fire flint and steel were used to strike sparks into this inflammable material, and a blaze would finally start up and set the fire going. A fire was nearly always kept alive in one of the fireplaces in the house by covering up the coals with ashes when the heat was not needed. I was a pretty good-sized boy when matches came into general use.

All the cooking was done at first in pots, pans, and iron ovens which were set in or upon the coals; and in my opinion the cast-iron cook stove and the modern ranges have failed to add anything to the flavor or wholesomeness of the food cooked by the pioneer process. (My father bought the first cast-iron cook stove which came into our neighborhood, and it was so heavy that it took six men to lift it into the rear end of a two-horse wagon bed.) I have never tasted anything more delicious than the pork and beans baked in a "Dutch oven" covered up all night, in the coals and ashes of the old fireplace at home, or the meats broiled upon the coals themselves under a watchful and experienced eye; and

baked potatoes never were so good as when roasted in the coals and ashes of that same old fireplace.

Nearly all the furniture at first was of the home-made variety. Tables, beds, chairs, and bureaus were usually the work of the head of the family, and crudities abounded in profusion. Space was necessarily conserved, since cabins were the rule at first, and, ventilation being good wherever there were fireplaces and liberal cracks between the logs, the health of the inhabitants never suffered even though an entire family slept in the same room.

Of course beds could not usurp the entire space, so they manufactured for the children what was familiarly known as the "trundle bed." This was nothing more or less than a very low bed which barely escaped rubbing against the floor. It was provided with castors, and during the day it was slipped entirely under the high four-poster of father and mother. At bedtime it was pulled out from under their bed nearer to the fireplace, and the youngsters soon crawled beneath the covers and slept sweetly, warmly, and soundly until morn's early dawn. Then father would arise and build the fire. This he did by shoveling off the ashes with which the



coals had been covered the night before and throwing some dry wood upon the bright red embers. A blazing fire was soon under headway, and the chill of a winter's morn quickly faded away. The youngsters then arose and donned their clothing and moccasins beside its warmth and glowing radiance.

For the babes a big evenly balanced and well-rounded "sugar trough" was brought in from the "sugar camp" and the little one ensconced therein amid feather ticks and pillows. Many a great statesman was rocked to sleep in childhood's earliest hours by the loving hand of a fond mother who could afford nothing better than a sugar-trough cradle.

At first there were no mills in the new country, and we had to pound our corn fine just as the Indians did in order to have our corn cakes and corn bread. It was several years before the old water mills came on the scene, and no wheat or rye was raised in our neighborhood until the first mill arrived. This was an old grist mill of the water-wheel type, and the corn and wheat were reduced to powder by being ground between two milled stones called "burrs," which revolved just underneath a big storage receptacle called a "hopper." This hopper had a small hole

at the bottom directly over these stones, and fed the grain to the revolving burrs through an opening in the upper stone.

In those days every farmer took his own corn and wheat to the mill and waited until it was ground. The miller took out his charge for the service, which was called his "toll," and then the farmer took the residue, which was always the larger portion. Quite often in the busy season one would have to wait all day, and sometimes far into the night, before his "grist" was ready for him. We pioneer boys and girls always considered it a treat to accompany father to the mill. We could fish in the mill race, romp around the mill, and have a jolly time all day long. We could also go in bathing, or "swimming," as we called it, in "de natura" costumes, if it happened to be in the good warm days of summertime.

By-and-by sawmills arrived on the scene. They were the water-wheel type also. The saws were not circular, but straight-edged like the cross-cut saw, and were set in a frame and ran up and down through a log. They were not very speedy, but they managed to do the work for a time.

Perhaps some of the boys will not understand

what I mean by the water-wheel type of mill. For their enlightenment let me say that a dam was usually constructed across a creek or river. The water would rise to a great height behind it and furnish a supply even in dry seasons. From one side of this a channel, called a "mill race" was dug directly to the water wheel which was to turn the machinery of the mill. This wheel was constructed of wood with little trough-shaped buckets across its width. The water from the mill race ran at a high rate of speed against these buckets on the wheel. The weight and velocity of the water combined caused the wheel to revolve rapidly, and thus to turn and operate the machinery attached to the shaft on which the wheel was securely fastened.

About twice a year the miller would clean out the wheel and portions of the race. This would leave the race temporarily dry, and reveal to our eager boyish eyes all the fish in the mill race. There were some lively scrambles you may be sure to gather up the best of these finny creatures. Sometimes there would be as many as a couple of wagon loads of nice fish, and thousands of smaller ones. The water was turned on or off from the race by means of small gates near the dam at the head of the mill race.

Perhaps the boys and girls of today would like to learn something about how our mothers in pioneer days made the greater part of our clothing. In the first place the sheep were sheared; then the wool was washed, and taken to what was called a carding mill. There it was carded, and came back nice and smooth to our mothers, who put it on the spinning wheel and spun it out in long fine threads called yarn; and into still finer threads for weaving purposes. Then on an old loom operated with her foot, and the shuttle by her hand, she wove the threads into cloth for our clothes or woolens for our shirts and dresses for the ladies and girls.

Before the carding mills came we did not wear pants of jeans, but buckskin served the purpose just as well. Cloth for other purposes came too high for us while buckskin was so cheap.

Up to the time I was twelve years old I had never seen any kind of footwear save buckskin moccasins, which were worn by men, women, and children. The elk and moose hides were tanned by our own fathers and made by them and our mothers into moccasins. These were sewed usually by a fine thread of split deer tendon or a wax-end thread, if we had one. There never

was anything quite so comfortable, durable, and waterproof as the old moccasin, if it was kept properly saturated with tallow mixed with burnt straw. The latter filled up the pores in the hide and kept out all water. Boys who are used to patronizing boot-blackening stands please think of the condition of our hands after applying this mixture of hot tallow and black burned straw to the surface of the moccasins on the hearthstones of the old fireplace.

Our stockings and socks were knit by hand by our mothers and sisters, and there were few so-called leisure moments in winter when their nimble fingers were not busy with the knitting needle and the skeins and balls of yarn. I have seen little girls nine years of age who could knit socks and mittens with the best of them. Boys and girls learned to work early in those days. A big healthy boy could handle a plow or wield a hoe in the cornfield at from eight to ten years of age, and could almost do a man's work at sixteen, but none were slaves.

Farming implements were of the very simplest sort at that time, no machinery being in existence. Our plows were made of wood with iron edges, and an iron coulter to cut the roots that were always in the way in the "new ground."

The corn was cut with a corn knife, or "cutter," by hand; and wheat, rye, and oats were cut with sickles and cradles by hand and bound up with bands of straw by hand. All other implements were of like character. Cultivation with the hoe in the "new ground" was a prime necessity.

In the summer time and until the latter part of October, "when the frost was on the pumpkin and the fodder in the shock," all good boys and girls went barefoot about their tasks, and did not mind it a bit; in fact, they were always anxious in the springtime for parental permission to shed their moccasins and wool stockings, or socks, as the case might be.

Surely we had an old "swimmin' hole," and we could do anything ever done at such a place by James Whitcomb Riley or any of his chums. And it was a sight, bigger, deeper, wider, and prettier than that little Brandywine Creek down in Indiana, and that was certainly a delightful and joyous spot, which well deserved immortality in verse.

Our first seed corn we obtained from the Indians, and it was of two varieties; one a beautiful white corn, and the other an early corn, which we used, as the Indians did, for early roasting ears and succotash. The Indians

cut a great deal of their corn off the cob while in the milky state, and dried it in the sun. This they used in the winter season to boil in the pot with venison; and it made a very palatable dish, as I can testify from personal experience on many occasions. The remainder of their corn they allowed to mature, and pounded it up for meal, out of which they made their corn cakes.

Oxen were the great beasts of work and burden in those days. Their gentleness and slow movements, as well as their strength, made them almost indispensable in the "new ground" in the "clearings." Horses did not come into use for farm purposes to a great extent for many years; not until roots, stumps, and brush gave way to regular husbandry, and level fields became the rule instead of the exception. Then the slow-going oxen were superseded by the speedy horse, and good roads made him necessary as a beast of travel.

Farm stock was very scarce for many years, and every calf, pig, and lamb was allowed to reach maturity, and most of them were bred to increase the numbers.

Wild bees were numerous, and honey was very plentiful in the forests for many years. Hollow basswoods or lindens were favorite places for



them to make their homes; also hollows in big oak limbs, which would often run back into a hollow place in the main part of the tree. The bees could be easily traced to these trees, and when we located the trees we would cut them down and get the honey. To prevent the bees from stinging us we would have torches of straw, and they would always fly into the flames like moths and burn to death. We often obtained a wash-tub full of honey from a single swarm. Sometimes we would remove swarms to hives at home and thus domesticate them.

As a boy I soon became very expert at locating bee trees. I once made a big mistake, however. I followed a bee toward his tree, but lost him a short distance from that spot; and, looking about, I thought I spied a lot of bees issuing from the top of a big pine stub which was hollow near the top. Four of us cut the stub down, and as it fell we rushed up to seize the honey and fight the bees away. It seems that in falling the stub broke in two pieces right at the place where the nest was, and when we reached the tree it seemed as though thousands of white wasps attacked us and made us run for cover. One stung me between the eyes, and the pain was so great that I fell to the ground; but I could not lie there, so I



jumped up and ran to the bushes, where I found my companions. Afterward we located the bee tree, a few rods distant, cut it down, and got an enormous lot of honey; but we all went home covered with knots and bumps as reminders of our interference with the home life of white wasps.

Sometimes a mischievous impulse will seize hold of boys which seems irresistible, and the pranks and devilish tricks that they will impose upon dumb brutes is almost unbelievable. While laboring under those spells we used to wait for cattle to pass under the limbs of trees where great nests of hornets, almost as big as a bushel basket, hung suspended from their branches; and when the poor cattle would get directly beneath this nest one of our number would throw a club and hit the nest. The hornets would immediately sally forth in great force, and sting the cattle upon their backs until they bellowed with pain and ran for the bushes in a mad gallop, while we, little rascals, would roll upon the grass in fiendish glee. Now hornets are the most vicious of the entire "stinger" family, and it was indeed a shame to inflict such punishment upon poor innocent cattle. If our parents had ever heard of our escapades they would surely have visited

condign punishment upon that part of our anatomy where the hornets stung the cattle.

In those days pioneer boys had many playmates which were not of their kind; but they enlivened the hours and the activity of youth was well sustained by their presence.

My father often caught black and brown bear cubs in the woods straying too far from the rendezvous where their mothers had no doubt left them and charged them to keep invisible; but like all youngsters, they did not mind their parent and, as usual, came to grief, and in these cases to captivity. We had much sport with young cubs, which would become as tame as dogs, following us around wherever we would allow them to go. They became much attached to us, and often, while in the woods, I would hide behind a stump or tree to see what effect it would have on Mr. Cub. He would look all around and then cry and whine most piteously for me. Then when I would step from behind the tree or stump and he would catch sight of me, he would come racing toward me as fast as his clumsy legs could carry him. His locomotion was a gallop, and the way he could get over the ground after a running boy and overtake him makes me think of the ease with which the

famous thoroughbred Dick Welles used to overhaul with his swift, graceful, undulating gallop his competitors at the old Washington Park track. While viewing this performance my mind always went back to the cubs which used to chase and overhaul me in the Michigan woods in my boyhood days.

I remember one particularly saucy brown bear cub, which had grown to good proportions and had become very tame, but we always kept a chain fastened to him by which to tether him at night. During the day he ran loose, dragging the long chain. One day he concluded to explore the woods without due leave of absence, and I pursued him with our pack of dogs. They soon overhauled him, and ran him up to the top of a hill, where he sat with his back to a tree and fought them off. I came along and got hold of the chain and pulled on it, trying to persuade him to follow me. I did my best to coax him, but he was in an ugly mood and would not be persuaded. He was stronger than I, and rapidly drew me toward him, shortening the chain as he pleased. I kept jerking it, and hanging on to it. Finally, when he had me close enough, he gave me a quick cuff with one of his paws alongside my face, which sent me tumbling down hill with

the blood flowing from the deep gash his claws had made in my cheek. It left a small scar which has never entirely disappeared, and can be traced whenever I shave closely. I got up, however, and, with my fighting blood aroused, returned to the contest. While I jerked on the chain the dogs got in his rear and gave him several good sharp bites. Then he changed his mind very quickly about the entire program, and trotted after me as though nothing had ever happened to mar the pleasure of the morning.

Father often found young fawns, wildcats, lynxes, and raccoons, and brought them home to us for pets, and we succeeded in taming all of them, and having much sport with them.

The young cubs always delighted to wrestle with the boys, and we encouraged them, too, sometimes coming out second best in the tussle. When they became full grown we usually disposed of them, especially after an unfortunate occurrence which I must here relate.

Neighbor Decker at Flint had a big full-grown bear, which had been raised from cubhood by his son, who was at the time it happened a young man of twenty, hale, robust, and muscular. He had taught the cub to wrestle, and kept up the sport until he was fully grown. The animal had



Streeter, a Pioneer Showman



never shown any disposition to be ugly, so there seemed no reason to discontinue the sport because he had become a full-grown bear. The youth having also grown to maturity, felt no fear of his playmate. But one day, while engaged in a particularly close contest, the bear became very angry and crushed the young man to death in his arms before help could reach him. After this tragic occurrence we disposed of a cub before he reached the dangerous stage, not caring to take any chances.

There was another phase of my youthful life which was particularly delightful and somewhat remunerative as well. This was trapping wild game of the fur-bearing kind, and commenced when I was about twelve years of age. My father and older brothers gave me valuable and experienced instruction on the finer points of the business.

I was an interested and apt scholar and soon had my deadfalls, pitfalls and snares at work for miles along the Flint River, and caught large numbers of raccoon, beaver, fox, otter, mink and muskrat. Their hides I stretched by the processes then in use, and sold them for prices which now seem ridiculously small; but it afforded great sport, and the exercise of cunning and ingenuity,



and the opportunity to acquaint myself with the habits and traits of almost every fur-bearing animal living there at that time.

We also had our domestic pets in which we took great pride. Almost every boy had his own dog, pig, and sometimes calf. I trained several calves up to young oxen, and accustomed them to the use of the yoke, often getting my bare feet cut by their sharp hoofs during the process. My father, who had given them to me, usually bought them back at this stage of their development, and I was glad of the opportunity to sell to him, for it kept my old-time pets at home. I was always loath to part with old friends.

I always managed to coax my pet pig into a distant fence corner by himself, and there give him the best of food. This caused him to grow and fatten at a livelier rate than his fellows, and he was always the choicest of the litter in a short time. His pigship soon grew particularly appreciative of these favors and would follow me down the lane like a dog. When he had devoured the food he would roll over and grunt his gratitude as long as I cared to tarry by his side.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE CONTRAST

How different was this wholesome happy life of those pioneer days from that of the street urchin of our great cities, who gets his instruction as a rule from older and often degenerate saloon-loafing companions, whose footsteps he speedily learns to follow, while father and mother are too busy earning money to pay for food, clothing, and rent to give much attention to their offspring.

While the conditions of pioneer life may not have been all that could be desired, how far superior were they to such as now prevail in the great cities. I am now past the allotted three-score and ten, but yet active and hearty, and if I had to choose between the country toil and wage slavery I would not hesitate to go back to the country and live in a cabin, if need be, and till the soil to earn my daily bread. If I were a young man, or a man with a family, nothing could induce me to become a wage slave of the parvenu rich, and sell my children into

the ever-increasing wage slave system, whose masters (slave drivers of the most diabolical sort) for the love of the accursed, degenerating and indefensible luxury of millions of unearned wealth, wrung from the fathers, mothers, sons and daughters of this great republic, reach out with greedy hands to drag ever-increasing millions into their shambles of factories with their pretentious hospital attachments and their gray-ghost kidnapping ambulances. I would rather "be a dog and bay the moon" than to feed my progeny into the maws of these outlaws of society—these murdering, plundering pirates of high finance.

These men are the worst traitors who ever trod the soil of our glorious land; a country dedicated by our forefathers to liberty, independence, and the right to the pursuit of happiness, and baptized with the dying blood of thousands of them. Yet these traitors believe in none of the fundamental principles for which our forefathers fought and died, and upon which our government is builded; they do not even believe in the very keystone of the sacred structure, that the will of the majority of the people, whatever it may be, is supreme at all times, and that the minority shall have no right to violate

that will so long as it remains upon the statute books of the land, and that they shall not unlawfully endeavor to remove it therefrom.

Yet these arch traitors have, for the past twenty-five years or more, openly violated the laws of the land by their unlawful combinations, black-lists, discriminations, rebates, and countless other willfully unlawful acts. But worse than all else, they have done everything under the shining sun which they and their degenerate and unmoral lawyers, and other paid tools and crooks, could think of to prevent the reign of the popular will, to thwart and make impossible the sovereignty of the people. And, for what? That they in their selfish greed might be sovereign, the people their serfs, and that the wealth produced by the toiling millions might be their own stolen private property.

And it is a matter of common knowledge that to accomplish their ends they have bribed our courts, our town and city councils, our state legislatures, our members of Congress, and have even elected themselves and their paid lawyers to the United States Senate under the guise of being representatives of the people, when in fact the legislature which elected them had been bought outright, or its members beforehand elected with

the money of these criminal traitors to free government.

They have even had the audacity to demand and dictate to the national conventions of the great political parties the nomination of their own hirelings for Chief Executive of the nation; and they have many times tempted weak senators and congressmen, who had not hitherto been attached to their pay roll, and their downfall has been the talk of the nation.

But what penalty have these traitors paid? Do any of them languish in dungeons or forfeit the charters of their corporations to the people from whom they obtained the right to operate a business in compliance with the people's laws? What penalty have they paid for reversing the people's will by the use of money instead of the ballot? Why, their paid lawyers have been boosted into the Attorney General's chair of the nation, and their candidate has been made Secretary of the Treasury of the United States not once, but many times.

This has been the rule rather than the exception. The only ones to pay the penalty have been the cheap novices who tried to get into the select circle of outlaws without serving the required apprenticeship, or to foil some well hatched

scheme to sell watered stock to the people via the Wall Street route, or to execute a trick of the same kind without permission of the overlords of the game. The only men to pay the penalty have been those men whom these very traitors, these pirates beyond the law, have marked for slaughter. These were the men who set the dogs after Morse, Heinze, John R. Walsh, and all the others who have paid the penalty. And in every case these piratical ghouls have followed in the wake and reaped the harvest of slaughtered stocks which nobody else could buy, and rewater and foist upon the investing public after the opium of a few months of silence had made it again gullible.

Nothing has escaped their all-devouring activities. Even the churches and the colleges have been subsidized wherever this was possible. They have even gone so far as to hire experts to do nothing but distribute this "dirty slush fund," as we used to call such money in a political campaign in which they sought to dominate some situation of importance.

This money is more like opium than anything I can liken it to in its immediate effects. The president of the college and the board of trustees soon get rid of all the professors of spirit and

truth; and soon in their chairs are installed the apologists of commercial piracy and disloyalty to the fundamental principles of the republic. Soon wage slavery is justified under the guise of necessity in big business operations, and the heads of this accursed oligarchy of wealth are pointed out to the rising generation by professors, nation-wide lecturers, and so-called ministers of the gospel, as samples of the nation's choicest fruit in the national orchard of manhood.

What is the purpose of all this activity in hitherto free and unexploited institutions? That the white wage-slavery system of these dollar-hog traitors to free government and human liberty may be perpetuated and maintained throughout all eternity so far as this part of the earth is concerned, and that it shall be justified by the teaching and the preaching of the most high and holy in the churches and in the schools of the land, just as black slavery was in its day from Father Abraham to Bob Toombs of Georgia.

Think of it; there are today more than one million six hundred thousand children and six million women in the bondage of these dollar hogs and their so-called factories, shops, stores, and offices in this supposed land of freedom and free opportunity. Note the want ad. columns



of the great dailies of every city in the nation. You will find them filled with the insatiable demand for women, boys and girls at the pittance of a wage to keep their establishments running at full speed and capacity. And in all those great industries where such help is not usable the crying demand is for millions of cheap foreigners who will work for a pittance and live more like pigs than human beings.

Go to the great steel mills of the nation, the harvester factories, and all of the allied metal and iron mills, and you will find millions of foreigners working at a wage that any self-respecting American born and bred citizen would scorn to accept, because he knows it is unjust and dishonest.

We see the papers of the land filled with questions as to the underlying cause for the millions of unemployed men in our great cities—"the army of unemployed" as it is everywhere characterized and referred to. An appropriation of four million dollars is said to have been asked for by our national Secretary of Labor to inquire exhaustively into this very subject.

The cause is plain to be seen, so plain that he who runs may read and see; even the blind ought not to go wide of the mark. These men are un-

employed, walking the streets of our cities by day and by night seeking honorable employment because the dollar hogs of the land some years ago discovered that they could hire women, children, and ignorant foreigners to do their work for half, or even less, than self-respecting men would accept for such tasks.

This enslavement of the women—wives, sisters, boys and girls—of the nation at a pittance while husbands and brothers walk the streets in search of employment, is the great indictment of the age in which we live, and of the government which we have been taught to respect, but which no longer protects our families from the rapacity and inhuman greed of these dollar hog destroyers of that most sacred institution of the human race—the *home*!

So the homes of the land must be broken up, and our wives and children sacrificed to the maws of these dollar hogs that they may pile up their unearned millions and live abroad in such luxury that they are the envy of kings; in such splendor and wanton extravagance that the fabled wealth of Croesus and Solomon fades into insignificance. And finally they have the impudence and effrontery to pose as philanthropists and demand the laurel chaplet from the American people.

Here in Chicago we have a dollar hog, one Julius Rosenhog, let us call him for convenience, who asks the people of this supposed land of liberty and human freedom to pat him on the back because he has donated several hundred thousand dollars toward the liberation of the black slaves of the Southland from economic bondage, while at the same time he maintains one of the largest and worst slave pens in the Northland, where thousands of white men and women, boys and girls toil daily for a pittance; one of the most cruel and debasing institutions that ever existed in the history of the human race.

The pages of history will be searched in vain to find a more despicable and realistic system of human slavery than that practiced by Rosenhog and his kind throughout this land of so-called Christendom and civilization. A refined system of human slavery, which can only boast of free air and water, both often dirty and polluted; a hellish system founded on fiendish human greed which knows no satiation, and which only the American dollar hog has been capable of foisting upon the human race without any effort at concealment; brazenly, openly, defiantly, and even insultingly. Witness the exhibition of some of these gentlemen (last winter) when called before

the legislature investigating committee, of which the estimable Lieutenant Governor of Illinois was the author and champion. The gorillas of Darkest Africa are more considerate of their kind than some of these hired bulldozers of human help in these stores and sweat-shop factories.

And even the high-schools, so-called, must have the workshops and technical schools of the dollar hogs injected into them at public expense, in order that these gentry may be sure that few of the school children will escape their wage-slave system and that they may lay hands on them at very tender ages and thus make sure of their valuable, not valued, services.

Fellow countrymen, here let us draw the line—the dead line, if you please! Let us resolve that they shall never take these little universities of the people—of the parents and children alike—by whose money and for whose benefit they were originally created, without a battle royal! I carried a musket loaded with powder and ball for several years in the Sixties to preserve the integrity of our institutions and to prevent the further enslavement of the black race of the nation; and, if need be, I think I can shoulder one again with even keener relish to put down the white slavery of the dollar hogs of the North.

I am not afraid to call for volunteers in such a cause as this if right and reason will not avail anything as in the old days of black slavery. If force be the only arbiter of this question then speed the day that I may mingle in the conflict and see the victory of liberty for the white race. I want to live long enough to see the end of this irrepressible conflict.

The technical schools are all right in their place; but their place is not in the public school system, nor in the life of the child of public school age. Their place is at a later period of their age and development. There will be no need for children to toil in the institutions of these dollar hogs at such ages. There will be plenty of time for them to spend in obtaining a more liberal education and a broader view of life and its manifold duties and relations, before taking up technical work if their fathers are employed at just wages. If this be brought to pass, wives, mothers, sisters and brothers will not be compelled to toil for the dollar hogs; the father will not be compelled to walk the streets looking for a "job," as it is called in the vernacular of the street, nor to skip the town in search of work and to save his sense of self-respect, while his wife and children labor for

the dollar hogs at a pittance; and the home, that most sacred of all human institutions, will not then be sacrificed to the conscienceless dollar hogs.

In some sections of this country *home* destroyers inevitably meet their just fate, and the man who has the courage and the disposition to administer the medicine is turned free by a jury of his peers in almost every case. What about the *home destroyers* of the Northland? They are a more numerous band and their depredations are ten thousand times more frequent, more sure and certain, more despicable and detestible, more diabolical and abominable than those of the South and West.

This situation, my countrymen, is the impending danger of the hour! It is the one problem which must be solved before all others. It cannot be delayed. It cannot be palliated or compromised. It must be met, and that immediately, if we are to stem the tide of this dollar-hog slavery which engulfs the nation, and sweeps over our homes, and robs our firesides under the guise of commercial necessity. We must meet it and strangle it in a death struggle if we are to rescue our homes, our children and our wives! It must not own our public schools, nor dominate



them. It has gone too far already in that direction. *It must be halted!*

The dollar hogs have subsidized the press, the church and pulpit, the universities and the medical schools; not all of them, thank God, but too many of them; they shall not own the public school system of the nation, our public school system, if you please!

They shall not teach our children longer that to hold a "job," to work and slave for a lifetime for a pittance, is the *joy* and the *aim* of human life; that to be an uncomplaining slave of the dollar hogs, or to develop into one by craft and cunning, dishonesty and robbery, is the true ideal and goal of American citizenship; that the most successful and powerful dollar hogs of the nation's history are the noblest handiwork of God, and the ideal business men of our nation's history! It shall not come to this while the red blood of my ancestors and the clear mind of an honest conscience are yet my heritage. I will fight them though mine is the only voice to be heard and the only sword to be drawn in Freedom's name for the freedom of our schools, our wives, our children, and the freedom of the human race in America!

I am not a socialist, nor any other "ist." I



am simply a true descendent of Revolutionary sires, of defenders of liberty and human freedom; a believer in real democracy, in the broad sense of that term; and I am disgusted with the pretense that we have any longer a real democracy so far as the government is concerned. Still I have not lost faith in the hope that such a government is yet possible if the manhood of the land will demand such a government, and be satisfied with nothing less, even though we have to put our muskets on our shoulders to accomplish it. It is well worth the effort—just such an effort, if need be! Let us unite and fight is my slogan! Let us neither ask nor give quarter. It must be the unconditional surrender of the dollar hogs of this land in the name of human liberty, freedom, justice, and equality!

If we had a real democratic government we would have a national minimum wage law, though it took a revolution to get it, and though every document from the Constitution to the last act of Congress had to be overturned in getting it. And this minimum wage should be placed so high that these slave-driving dollar hogs would prefer to hire men once more rather than women and children. If we had a real democratic government instead of a subterfuge government we

would have a national employment law which would fix the age-limit of the employment of children at eighteen years. Then we would have no child labor anywhere. Such laws, with others supplementary, would automatically emancipate from their inhuman bondage the millions of mothers, wives, children (boys and girls) and rehabilitate the vast army of the unemployed, the husbands and fathers in our midst, at just wages, not living wages.

That term "living wage" is an abomination in the sight of God and man, for the head of the family must have more than a living wage. His old age and sickness must be provided for in his wage if it is to be a just system, and none other can be tolerated in a free land. Every head of a family has the right to earn a wage sufficient to provide for the ownership of a comfortable home and some property. How can this be possible on the "living wage" we hear so much talk about by seemingly intelligent persons. These dollar hogs contend even now that their present wages are living wages, and can produce thousands of so-called economists who will prove that the working man and his family can live on the wage they pay by eliminating most meats and vegetables, and using cheap sub-

stitutes in their stead. And in recent years the Department of Agriculture has been guilty of publishing at the national expense countless thousands of pamphlets devoted to that very philosophy of the dollar hogs. If this does not prove that, in recent years, the government has been bedding with the dollar hogs, then I am no judge of evidence or of human nature. In the long years that I have tarried on this old earth I have made the acquaintance of many people, and I flatter myself that I have learned quite a bit by mixing with them, and that my judgment of such facts and circumstances has rarely been amiss.

Men who labor for a wage are entitled to a "just wage," and no just wage can ever be possible while the laborer is not in a position to have a reasonable voice in determining what that wage must be. Consequently the government, his creature and servant, must at all times exert its power and authority to prevent an unjust fixation of wages in every industry. Labor in its individual character being the weaker should have every possible safeguard which a just government can possibly throw about it to prevent injustice to the individual. And every individual has a right to expect this of his government. The

government in a free country belongs to no one individual any more than to another; but necessarily the weaker individual has a greater demand upon its protection than has his stronger brother, the employer, who always has a superior point of vantage and means for his own protection against injustices.

This is true of both the state and national governments, but in the present crisis it would seem that only the national government can give adequate protection to the wage workers of the land, the very existence of whose integrity and homes is now at stake at this juncture of our national life. The government must intervene, and that quickly, if justice and eternal right are to prevail without an appeal to arms, that final arbiter of every just cause driven to the wall by injustice and human greed and rapacity.

I feel justified in saying that this country of ours is cursed with the worst lot of outlaws who ever drew the breath of life, and who are ten thousand times more powerful and more vicious than the gentry for whom the very word "outlaw" was coined some hundreds of years ago. Their willful disregard of the people's rights and laws has been abundantly proved in the highest courts of the land, and likewise their

willful purpose to degrade and enslave their employes. Despite these facts the government has taken no intelligent action to safeguard the masses of its people from the rapacities of these outlaw dollar hogs who are destroying the homes of the land and reducing the wage earner to the depths of the most awful slavery the human race has ever known, and this hateful condition prevails in a land which has for more than a century boasted of its love for liberty, justice, and equality of opportunity, but which in fact has never truly existed. It is high time to make these things a *reality* though it should take a sanguine revolution to accomplish it. Justice must and shall prevail at any cost. No subterfuges nor compromises shall be made.

Every compromise with black slavery was a failure and of short duration, and it had to be wiped out root and branch. Nothing less than this shall be the solution of white slavery. It must be obliterated wholly, and nothing less will be accepted. The sooner the government of the people announces *this* as its attitude the earlier will this result be accomplished. If it will not assume this attitude then a bloody conflict is inevitable, for this conflict is as surely an *irrepressible* one as was the conflict over black slav-

ery. A house divided against itself shall not stand. It will be a slave nation or it will be a free nation. It shall be a *free* nation!

But he who thinks that this will come to pass by dilatory or compromising tactics is mistaken. Tariff laws and money laws will not solve the wage-slavery system of the dollar hogs, and it is idle to indulge such a presumption. *Radical* and *prompt* action will be required on the part of the government to avert a bloody clash in the near future if this situation is not squarely met and solved, and justice assured to the wage earners of the nation by the most positive laws.

This question will eventually reach every home in the land. The farmers are furthest removed from it at present, but thousands of farm boys and girls drift into the cities every year, lured by the unknown life, which always seems most attractive to mortals. In a little while they become wage slaves, and their children likewise; so the problem is only a short remove from the most protected home in the land, the farmer's fireside. He should be more sympathetic than he has been in the past if he is to be just to his brethren in the city, who are struggling as never before to exist under the most trying conditions without resort to open revolution.



But rest assured that the revolution has taken place within the mind of the individual, for such injustices cannot be endured without the keenest inward defiance; and remember that there is always a point beyond which forbearance ceases to be a virtue. A straw will sometimes constitute the additional weight that breaks the camel's back, as we used to say in the olden times.

And it is well to remember also that our ladies are making a strenuous and valiant effort to win for themselves equal rights with men in the exercise of the ballot, and everything tends to indicate their ultimate triumph. God speed the day, for they are infinitely better qualified to exercise that right than the drunken bums in the rotten boroughs of our great cities, the ignorant negroes, and the foreign millions from Southern Europe, who know little of our history, institutions, or fundamental principles of government, and care less. It has been maddening to me to see these ignorant incompetents voting at all elections, while our intelligent American women are denied that right and privilege.

I have always been an advocate of woman suffrage, and believe that when women have the right to vote they will aid immensely in wiping out countless evils to which male voters seem



brutally obtuse. Among these might be mentioned the saloon, red light districts, gaming dens, and why not the white slavery of women and children, and every other great problem that confronts us at the present time? Because of their non-affiliation with factional politics, they ought to bring to the consideration of these matters a clear and unbiased view which the men have not done; or if they have, they have not had the courage of their convictions, else every one of these problems would have been solved and disposed of long ago.

Before I would become the slave of these outlaws and traitors who dominate the country at the present time I would take my family and go to the vacant lands of the nation, and work out a different existence. I believe that a return to the soil is the only chance the poor wage slave of today and his children have, and I rejoice in my old age to see so much talk in the newspapers and magazines about the return to the country as the salvation of the strugglers of the city. Let us hope that it will bear fruit. Let us hope also that the conscience of the nation will speedily awake and demand laws that will disfranchise and expatriate these traitorous outlaws who have debauched the government of our sires and en-

slaved the women and children of our country; confiscate their ill-gotten gains to the state, and ostracise them just as the old Greeks did such undesirables, who imagined their private interests were of greater consequence than the welfare of the state. The banishment of Napoleon clipped his wings and ended his exploitation of the peoples of Europe. Why not clip the wings of our Napoleons of so-called finance, our traitors to free republican government? These men are exploiting this nation, and robbing our sons of their rightful and equal opportunity, and making them slaves, mere hewers of wood and drawers of water for their enrichment; and, worse than all else, making them moral cowards and possible criminals. For such outlaws pay starvation wages, force men and women to live like the pigs and brutes of the field, and herd together like such animals, until poverty, misery, ignorance, and crime are their inevitable lot. Men who will by such conduct embrute and enslave their fellows, are the worst criminals who have ever trod God's footstool; for they slay by the millions, and make degenerate our whole body politic. They import millions of ignorant foreigners and pay them a pittance to work under conditions which no self respecting citizen of

the republic should be compelled to endure. They rob these poor ignorant laborers with impunity, and our government stands idly by, as though impotent to lift a finger to prevent the diabolical swindle. It is high time that we arm the government with laws which will put these robbers out of business forever.

There are plenty of men in this broad land of ours who would operate their business affairs under the law, and respect the will of the people as expressed in their laws, if given the opportunity; but such men have no opportunity or living chance under present conditions in competition with these outlaws. When did honest men ever have a chance with outlaws? So long as our government allows these robbers to dominate the business and commerce of the land and to retain their stolen plunder, so long will honest men be the easy prey of such villains.

And why should not their stolen plunder be confiscated? It has been established beyond controversy that it has been obtained by the robbery of untold millions of laborers living and dead. Individual restitution to the real owners is now impossible, but that does not justify the retention by the outlaws of their ill-gotten gains. In the case of lesser criminals convicted of such

offenses, the stolen goods are always turned over to a public custodian, and are eventually confiscated by the state, or government, which is the instrument of the people, hence for the people. Why should a different rule prevail in dealing with the more gigantic and more heinous offenders who rob everybody with impunity every hour of the day and night? Under such conditions it is the undoubted right and duty of the people and their government to confiscate the stolen property of the most criminal outlaws who ever existed in the history of the world.

The time is fast approaching when the people will realize that the millions which these outlaws have piled up in such rich quick fashion are morally and rightfully the savings of the people, and that they may rightfully lay hands upon them and claim them for their own. If we can justly and lawfully claim a portion of these millions by such subterfuges as the inheritance and income taxes, then we may by the same process of reasoning claim more, and finally may have the manhood and the courage to come out boldly into the open, and claim the hoard as the rightful and indisputable savings of the people, who, though prevented by robbery from placing them in the bank to their own credit, have just as much right

to claim the stolen plunder from these outlaws as any article of personal property recovered from an outlaw thief. Until this day of judgment and of justice shall arrive let us return to the country and till the soil, let us refuse to be slaves!

There are millions of broad acres of the choicest land the sun ever shone upon in a dozen states of this nation, unoccupied and fruitless, waiting for the starving, downtrodden wage slaves of the cities to come thither and be happy and free.

Out in southern Idaho in the great valley of the Snake River, a few brief years ago, there were a million acres of supposedly desert lands, covered with sage brush; lands which for unknown ages had produced nothing of value, and which even the rains of heaven refused to bless by their downpour. Through the midst of this desert waste flowed the great river, whose course lay through deep canyons it had cut in ages past, and sometimes over great precipices, where its rushing waters formed stupendous cataracts several hundred feet high, as it hurried on its way to the sea. But neither its waters nor the arid acres of its great valley had blessed mankind since the day of their creation.

During the century past thousands of wander-

ers and sightseers came and went without so much as a thought of the possible fertility of the soil or the possible utility of the river and its waterfalls. They did not even dream that here lay a little empire richer than Egypt, and holding vaster wealth than any Golconda or Eldorado known to man. But finally there came two men, Hollister and Perrine, who gazed upon this scene with prophetic vision. As they stood upon the heights overlooking this vista of nature's wonderland they dreamed a dream. They beheld in the immediate future a picture from which all this stern hardness and barrenness, this desolation and waste both of land and water has disappeared, for in its stead, upon the canvas of the mind, silently and swiftly had stolen the outlines of an Eden of loveliness in which these broad acres blossomed as the rose, and these stupendous waterfalls, harnessed by the ingenuity of man, pumped the life-giving waters throughout the length and breadth of this erstwhile barren valley, and as it did all this it generated light, heat, and power to serve scores of towns and cities which here and there sprang into life and action as if by obedience to some magician's wand. Railways and roads threaded the landscape as they peered into the vista before them;



and thousands of busy people appeared upon the plains and peopled the towns and cities, and as they toiled bounteous harvests made them happy and glad, and they rejoiced that good angels had led them to this modern land of Canaan.

It was but a dream, but these dreamers wrought as well as dreamed; and today this valley in their hands has developed into one of the garden spots of the world, in fact, one of the wonders of the world! In every particular and feature their work has exceeded the promise of the pictured loveliness which they beheld that day upon the heights of Shoshone and Twin Falls. These pioneers of industry have wrought more good to humanity than all the missionaries who ever lived, and in time to come they will be hailed as greater heroes than Alexander, Caesar, or Napoleon, for they came to build and to give, while the latter came to destroy and exploit mankind.

In many other states lie millions of acres of land ready for the plowshare, but no man's hand comes to reclaim it and husband its fruitfulness. In the empire of the great state of Texas alone, bigger than the great empire of Germany and the states of Illinois and Indiana combined, are millions of acres beckoning the hungry wage



slaves of the cities to come and labor not in vain. And the day is not far distant, in my humble judgment, when this government of ours will awake to its duty to stake these people for a start upon these lands, as the Canadian government is now doing for every emigrant who needs its aid to build up a home on the uninhabited acres of that great domain.

Some of our wise men for years have laughed to scorn the idea of government loans upon farm lands, yet at the same time every great life insurance company in the land has been putting out its surplus millions in mortgages on the lands of the farmers. But their terms and time limits have been unfavorable to the borrowers, and our government can obviate this evil just as many of the European countries have done for years. The wage slaves of the cities will desert their slave pens if the government will but lend them a helping hand. Whose government? The answer ought to be, "*their* government!" The government has always staked the bankers and the railroads, and it is high time that we had a change of the program. Let us have a new beneficiary. Suppose we let the bankers and the rail men paddle their own canoe for awhile and really demonstrate that they have brains enough to

make their enterprises pay without government aid. If they fail in the effort, then let the government take over these institutions and enterprises, as they really ought to do anyhow, as well as all other great natural monopolies and quasi-public enterprises for the protection of the people of the nation, and for the common weal.

I never know when to stop when I begin to talk about the dollar hogs and the industrial and other evils of our day; but having had my say I will resume, if you like, the story of my life.

## CHAPTER V

### THE WILD WEST

When I had passed my eighteenth year I met a man from New York State by the name of Cameron, who owned a lot of timber land in our vicinity. I entered into a contract with him to cut this timber into logs. This was my first business venture. We estimated the timber at three million feet. I immediately bought teams and horses, and hired quite a force of men and Indians and went to work. By the next Spring I had all of the logs in the river and rafted them down to the mill, which I started under another contract with Cameron to saw up all of this timber. This contract I completed within two years, and then sold the mill to Cameron. During this time I had at all times from forty to fifty employes. During the last year of this time I got a contract to build a tug boat, a schooner, and a large steam barge, all of which I built and floated in splendid shape, and felt that I had then learned something not only of lumbering but of ship building as well. I had also accumulated about ten thousand dollars'



The "Reutan," the Boat in which Streeter Was Stranded off Chicago Harbor



worth of property, and had married a very charming young lady in the meantime; but she later proved to be more of a charmer than a lady, as I found to my sorrow.

In the spring of 1861 I was attacked with a virulent type of what was popularly known as the "Western fever" and speedily succumbed thereto. Two neighboring gentlemen, Wesley Crawford and George Babcock, also fell victims to the same disease. As a result we soon set to work and constructed our own original "prairie schooners." These were made throughout of first-class material, well seasoned and built to endure. The upper part was a perfect little house built of light basswood, or linden, with doors and glass windows, the whole gaudily painted and thoroughly waterproof. It was fourteen feet in length and, set upon strong springs, it made a very light, cozy and comfortable refuge in all kinds of ugly weather. We each bought a team of Canadian Indian horses, the toughest article in horse flesh that ever served human kind, and after laying in all needed supplies, about the middle of the summer, accompanied by our wives, we started on our overland trip to the beautiful West, concerning which we had read so much that life in Michigan seemed dull

and commonplace beside it, and scarcely worth the living.

When I said "overland trip," I did so advisedly, for there was no other available way at that particular time. There were no railroads traversing the great Western plains and across the mountains into the land of golden California at that period of our history. Flying machines had not even been dreamed of so far as I know, and we would have welcomed even a trail when we got to the real "wild and woolly" part of this great journey. For the greater part of the journey it was indeed a trackless and unbeaten way, with the compass and the streams as our only guides. Bridges were an absent convenience, and a good fording place was all that we ever hoped to find; but our hopes were usually destined to disappointment.

After crossing the Mississippi on a flatboat and reaching the northern part of Kansas we rarely saw a human being, and the few we met did not hold out pleasant prospects to us when they learned that our destination was the mining camp called Denver. The savage Indians of the plains, we were told, were masters of all the country we were to traverse, and likely to annihilate us any fine evening they might fall upon



us. Their favorite hours of activity were those known as the dreamland hours, in which the tomahawk and the scalping knife played a prominent part. It was not a pleasant thing to contemplate, and the fact is we didn't stop to ruminate; we just pushed boldly on, ready and willing to take our chances. Every day we found changing scenes and new experiences in abundance.

But before we get deep into these experiences let us take a look at the earlier stages of our route.

We traveled via Saginaw, Lansing, Niles, Valparaiso, Indiana, Blue Island, Chicago, Wilmington, Streator to Quincy on the banks of the Mississippi—the Father of Waters, which the genius of man at that hour had not bridged.

Let us pause, however, for a short while and recall the passage of our caravan through Chicago, which was not yet the metropolis of the West.

We came into Chicago on the Blue Island road, then a mere trail through the wet, swampy country. Chicago at that time extended south no further than Lake Street. This street ran west to the river, and an old scow carried one across to the west side of the river, where the street

continued for some distance. Wabash and Michigan Avenues were virtually nothing but sand roads. There were a few houses around Fort Dearborn, an old log fort at Rush Street and the river. On the north side of the river at Rush Street there was a boarding house kept by a man by the name of Kinzie, and along the Lake and Chicago River north of the Kinzie home there were a lot of shanties of persons chiefly engaged in fishing. There were no streets on the north side of the river at that time.

On each side of River Street there were a few buildings. Near Rush there were several small stores and boarding houses. On the east end of what is now known as Water Street there was a lumber yard on the north side of the street, and on the south side of the street there were some small stores and offices. There were no docks or wharves, and no bridges; there was only an old flatboat which was pushed across the river with poles. There was about as much of a town on the west side of the river as on the east side. Canal and Lake Streets had a shanty town appearance. The trade was mostly a schooner trade in lumber from the lakes. There were a few plank sidewalks in front of business buildings, but the streets were pure sand and dirt.

At the river just east of where State Street is now, there was a sort of an old freight depot where the canal boats plying to and from St. Louis loaded and unloaded. This was the nearest approach to a dock.

Chicago was a most unpromising prospect, and we tarried there only about twenty-four hours, staying in the city over night, however. We were obliged to retrace the road to Blue Island to get out of the place and on our road to Wilmington, and thence to Quincy by the route before stated. If there were any Leiters, Gages, Fields, Pullmans, Armours, Cudahys, Palmers, or other millionaires in Chicago at that time they were mighty small potatoes, and no palaces of brick, stone, or Italian marble betokened their presence to the wandering stranger from abroad. From what we knew of them later they were all at this time clerks on peanut salaries. Their wealth was amassed after the Chicago fire, which catastrophe, we are informed, played an important part, a fact not hitherto generally known, or at least not widely circulated.

Kankakee was at that time three times as large as Chicago. In fact, all of the cities of Illinois that we passed through were small towns. Wilmington had a population of nearly three hun-

dred; Streator about fifty to sixty, and Quincy nearly five hundred. A wild prairie extended from Streator to Quincy. From there we crossed over the Mississippi into Missouri. Macon was a town of fifty inhabitants. St. Joseph on the Missouri River, contained about five hundred. There was a freight route overland from there to Salt Lake City. There was also another route farther north from Council Bluffs; but both took the Platte River finally as their guide farther West. At that time St. Joseph was the jumping-off place of civilization, and was the *frontier* town of the West. There was no cattle herding beyond this place, and none west of the Missouri River, on which it was located. We saw a small herd of Indian ponies, called "calico horses" because they were all spotted, west of the Solomon River, and they were as wild as deer.

The only white people we saw west of St. Joseph were at what is now known as the city of Marysville, Kansas; at that time it was only a spot on the prairie. An old man had squatted there and cut some prairie hay. We bought some of it for our horses, our supply having been exhausted just before we reached that point. Here we found two other families westward bound who were stranded there with their prairie

schooners. They had killed some buffalo and stretched and dried their hides, with which they had covered some shack houses they had erected for temporary homes. It was a desolate looking sight, and we did not tarry long with these denizens of the plains.

Pushing ahead we soon reached the forks of the Blue River not many miles west of Marysville, and just before we reached this junction of rivers we ran into the buffalo and killed our first specimen. We greatly enjoyed our first taste of buffalo steaks and roasts. After leaving Marysville we did not see a white face for more than six hundred miles. Some forty miles west of the forks of the Blue River we came to the Republican River, a very large stream, which we crossed. Here we found one of the most singular wonders of the world—a mound of pure white chalk fully three hundred feet long, one hundred and fifty feet wide, and the same in height, which lay on the very top of a steep alkali ridge. This marvelous natural monument could be seen on the naked prairie for miles around, and was much used by the Indians as a sentinel rock. Later it was cut into blocks by settlers and used in building houses, much as blocks of terra cotta are used.

From this elevation we saw one of the most wonderful sights that the eye of man ever beheld. Scattered over thousands of acres for miles around, as far as the eye could see to the westward, we beheld the greatest herd of buffalo which probably ever existed in the history of the world. The Indians estimated their number at three million head, and the plains were black with them. Here the animals came to the river for drink, and the places where they entered the river were called "buffalo wallows." These were at least three hundred feet wide, and half a mile long. All about these wallows were lying hundreds of car loads of bones, being the skeletons of buffalo which had floundered in the mud and died there.

At this spot we came into contact with two Indian tribes, the first we encountered on the trip. They were living on the buffalo herd, and following them as they shifted from the Dakotas to the Indian Territory, or "Indian Nation" as it was called at that time.

These tribes were fighting each other for the ownership and control of this great herd of buffalo. They were the first real "cattle kings" of the plains. They were on the scene long before the more cowardly and cunning Armours, Swifts,

Cudahys, Morrises, and Valentines had got into the game, and long before the "Texas steer" came into prominence.

When we saw the smoke of the Indian village on the horizon, and knew to a certainty that it was indeed an Indian village, we thought we had surely met our doom, owing to what we had heard from the denizens of St. Joseph and that vicinity of the hostile character of the Indians of the West. But we knew something of Indian character and habits; so drove straight into their village without a halt after we had started, and into the very midst of their tepees, where we saw only squaws and children. We learned afterward that the braves had seen our flashily painted red wagons miles away, and, not knowing the character of our invasion, nor our numbers and strength, had fled to the tall reed grasses and there secreted themselves until they were fully advised on these matters by the squaws, who crept out to them after we came into camp.

Crawford and Babcock could speak the Indian language very fluently, and I knew quite a smattering of it myself, so they immediately saluted the squaw contingent, and asked them where their husbands were, thereby greatly surprising them. The Indian ladies craftily replied that



they had gone out to bring in buffalo, which was a fabrication made out of whole cloth. As it was then evening we unhitched our horses and turned our wagons around so that they formed a triangle, with the horses inside the triangle, as we always did at night for safety. We could not afford to take any chances of our horses being stolen or straying away, for we could not in that country replace the loss of a single one.

The squaws at this juncture, perceiving that we intended camping there for the night, unknown to us dispatched some of their number to the hiding places of the braves, who thereupon came stealing into camp one by one, until there were more than three hundred of them in the village. As the first one came in Crawford talked to him, and told him that we had come from Michigan and knew all of the big chiefs of that country, Pokhagon, Dutton and Kayak, and that we were friends on our way to the mining camp of Denver. They were much pleased to have news from their kindred in Michigan, and, in fact, were so friendly that we tarried with them two days. They offered us buffalo meat and such supplies as they had; but as we had killed a buffalo ourselves just before sighting their camp, we were well supplied. This fact we proved to them in

order that they might thoroughly understand that we were not in need of their hospitality, and that our declination of help was due to that fact alone. All were so interested the first night of our stay with them, that we remained up nearly all night, talking and smoking around an enormous campfire.

They were greatly interested in inspecting our rifles, which were of the latest pattern (the Henry rifle), the only magazine gun made in that day. The guns held eight cartridges, and cost us a hundred dollars apiece. The Indians marveled at this capacity for repeated action. They also examined our wagons minutely and with the deepest curiosity manifest in their manner and countenances, for they had never seen any wagons of that particular style or construction.

On the morning of the third day, after bidding our hosts a friendly farewell, we proceeded on our journey, and after two days' travel to the westward struck the Solomon River, a very large and beautiful stream in those days. Here we encountered the other tribe of Indians who were fighting for the supremacy over this great herd of buffalo. They were as much surprised at our appearance on the scene as the first tribe had been on seeing our gaudy wagons approaching

their rendezvous. Their braves likewise hid in the sage brush along the flats of the river, but emerged when we made friendly overtures, and were particularly cordial when they learned of our peaceful mission. They took much interest in our welfare, and we stayed with them for two days, during which time we obtained much valuable information.

We especially wished to know how to cross the Solomon River, and the route which we should take and follow after crossing in order to strike the Platte River at the proper point to reach Denver by the shortest route. We took a piece of rough paper and made a general outline, explaining our wishes; and these Indians marked out very accurately the desired route and fords. Afterward we found them correct in every particular, and had no trouble in keeping the route.

At this period we had used up all of the prairie hay we had bought from the old squatter at Marysville, and were now obliged to stop each evening before sundown and unhitch our horses, in order to let them graze on the buffalo grass, which at that time was already bitten by the frost. We still had some corn, but horses cannot live on corn alone and prosper.

I have spoken of fording the rivers all along the route, the largest in the West, but did not describe the process by which we accomplished that difficult and dangerous feat.

On approaching a river we would unhitch the horses and ride up and down the banks until we selected what appeared to be the most favorable place for our ford, and then we would ride our horses into the stream and try out the situation before attempting to make it with our wagons. When we had found a spot which proved satisfactory to our ideas of safety, we would recross the river and, while resting our horses, prepare for the fording of the stream. We first cut down good-sized saplings, from which we made poles nearly six inches in diameter and about fifteen feet long. These we tied one on each side of our wagons, making them fast to the wheels near the hub and axle. These logs would help float the wagons, and kept them headed straight as well, because the running gears couldn't veer around as they do on land.

We also cut smaller poles and tied them on either side of the horses, much after the style of shafts on buggies. These prevented the horses from breaking loose and being swept away by the swift currents. After all this had been done

to our satisfaction, we would hitch up the horses and push carefully across to the other shore. We did not lose a horse, nor have a mishap at any of these fordings. Think of our ladies sitting in these wagons through such a thrilling experience, and then reflect upon the courage of womankind, and especially the pioneer women of America! The world can boast of none to match them.

But there were other experiences to face which were more difficult to solve than the fording of streams when we reached the mountainous country in the midst of winter. We often came to big gulches which were surrounded on either side by steep alkali ridges. On one side or the other snow had always slipped off into the gulch below, leaving a slippery declivity which could not be negotiated by the usual mode of travel. In such cases we were obliged to fasten a rope to a wagon, and after passing the rope around a tree for a pulley, we would descend into the gulch below and let the wagon follow at whatever speed we desired until the bottom was reached. When we wished to get it up the other side of the gulch and over the alkali ridge, we would pass the rope around some tree at the top of the ridge and, with aid of the horses, pull the wagon up. During our entire trip, which extended to the

Rio Grande River and back home again, we did not have a serious mishap with our wagons, and, almost incredible to relate, not a single pane of glass was broken.

In crossing the plains we encountered deer, elk, and antelope quite frequently, and we could on such occasions see from fifteen to forty of these creatures flocking and feeding together. We always found them along the streams where there were good grass and browse for them to feed upon. Prairie wolves and coyotes were so numerous that almost every night, judging from the noise they made, one would think that our horses would surely be devoured; but they were always inside the little triangular wagon corral, and were perfectly safe.

We had a big yellow dog with us, whose name was "Jack": he was a mixture of two famous breeds, Newfoundland and bulldog; a strange combination indeed, but lacking nothing in courage and fighting propensity. Jack was brave and irrepressible, and was never defeated nor scared off on but one occasion. One day he saw a big prairie wolf sitting on the brow of a high ridge, and at once dashed at him with great speed; but the wolf never moved a muscle until Jack attacked him. The conflict was very brief.

There was just one round, and Jack came flying back to the wagons entirely minus his fighting spirit. The long, sharp teeth and slashing cuts of Mr. Wolf had satisfied him in short order; he had more than a plenty. But Jack never deserted his post of duty under the wagons. When they attacked him there he held the fort and never was defeated. They could not get in his rear there, and when he could have a square face-to-face fight, he more than held his own, for he was an enormous fellow and a vicious fighter. By the time Jack had finished the trip with us his hide was well marked by the scars of many a well-fought battle with all manner of Western denizens.

Grouse, partridges, quail, and prairie chickens abounded in great numbers; the three former always along timbered streams, and prairie chickens in the open. We always managed to get our share of them. They were certainly delicious eating, and the hunting of them whiled away the tedium of many an hour.

Rattlesnakes, owls, and prairie dogs were very common acquaintances, and so friendly, agreeable, and compatible in disposition that very often we found them occupying the same hole in the ground.



Villages of prairie dogs were often seen which covered enormous expanses of territory, and were inhabited by millions of residents. They were the founders of the first metropolitan cities of the West; at least the only cities that could boast of their millions of inhabitants.

At the time we reached Denver, it was a small mining camp of not more than twenty-five people, all miners. There was not a woman in the camp. There were no buildings but "dug-outs" and "shacks," and everybody was engaged in gold mining with the pick and shovel. The miners were much surprised at our arrival, but more surprised that we should bring our wives on such a trip. The little mining camp surely gave no promise of becoming the greatest inland mountain city of the world. It was, however, most beautifully situated on a splendid plateau, and Pike's Peak, towering over all, loomed up like a grand sentinel in the cloudy distance. The sunrise and sunset were the most magnificent I had ever seen.

We stayed there only two days, and then moved on toward Canyon City, about a hundred miles to the southward. We passed through a rolling broken country covered with hazel and sage brush, which presented no charms to induce us

to tarry by the way. As we neared Canyon City the cactus was everywhere in evidence. Canyon City was also a mining camp of about forty or fifty people, and conditions were much like those in Denver. There were, however, seven or eight ladies resident there. About half the population was Mexican, the first we had seen on the trip.

This little mining camp had no attractions save for those intoxicated with the "gold fever," so we remained there only a couple of days, and then proceeded down a tributary of the Rio Grande to the Llano Estacado, or "Staked Plains," passing through a part of the Indian Territory and on into the state of Texas; but at that time we had no exact knowledge of state or territorial lines. That we learned later. We traveled through the Staked Plains for fully three hundred miles. On the way down we saw several scattered bands of Indians and Mexicans, of which we will speak later on.

This part of the trip southward was the most arduous of the entire journey. The levels of land were constantly changing and lowering, and we would travel apparently only a few miles on a continuous level, when we would come to an abrupt break or declivity of perhaps a hundred feet. Then we would have to search around for

a gully which would let us down to the next level. This usually caused us to retrace our way over quite a bit of ground, until we could get into the head of the gully and on the down grade. This performance was kept up for three hundred miles, until we struck the Staked Plains.

This journey, however, was enlivened by the presence of splendid hunting and plenty of game. Mountain lions, wolves, deer, antelope, wild turkeys and grouse were abundant, and we feasted like kings on the best that nature affords, and had plenty of excitement as well. The first mountain lion we ran across was lying spread out upon a big limb of a giant oak tree, which stood on the summit of a rocky hill. A shot from my rifle dropped him to the ground, where Jack soon finished him; but he did not have much of a job, for the rifle ball had penetrated the lion's brain and made any intelligent action on his part impossible. His struggling and clawing were all spasmodic. He was a magnificent specimen of his kind, and I soon had his hide stretched and drying on one side of my wagon. Then we journeyed on.

We saw some of the finest country it had ever been our pleasure to look upon in the "Staked Plain," but it was devoid of water, except for

“gyp springs,” which appeared at long intervals. Some of these springs were from four to ten rods across, and miry and swampy in character, with the water just oozing out of the ground. The entire surface covered by a spring would be literally filled with the bones of buffalo and other animals, which had come there in great numbers for drink and, being weak from long travel and thirst, had got into the mire and were too weak to get out. At others there were great “buffalo wallows.”

While passing through this dry country our wagon tires became so loose that they began to roll off of their own accord, and we were obliged to do a little blacksmithing without the convenience of shop or forge, coal, coke or wood. It was quite a problem to solve, but we finally figured it out without any of these supposed necessities. We tacked thin strips of seasoned wood we had in our wagons all around the felloes of the wheel, thus enlarging them slightly. Then gathering up an enormous pile of “buffalo chips” from the plains, we set fire to them, and piled the wagon tires on top of them and soon had them red hot. Then we slipped them on the enlarged felloes and, pouring water over them, soon had them shrunk until they were as

tight as when we first started on our trip. Thus you see necessity is ever the mother of invention.

Then we emerged into the prairie country of Texas, afterward to become famous as the home preserve of the "Texas steer," who made many a lazy lout a millionaire, and all of the rich quick Chicago packers, who stole the profits of the entire business after the cattle reached their pens.

On these prairies we saw deer, antelope, and buffalo, but not so many of the latter as we had seen in northern Kansas. We killed and ate all that we needed.

We ran across many stray bands of Indians in this country, and they were a nasty, wolfish looking and acting lot of humanity. They were always stopping to beg supplies from us, but never disturbed us in any way. In fact, they had more of the characteristics of the hyena. None of them could understand the language of the northern tribes with which we were familiar. All they could do was to grunt and point toward what they wanted.

These prairies were alive with game birds, wild turkeys, grouse, prairie chickens, and plover; and we did not want for the choicest sport, and feasted upon the finest game birds that ever tempted the appetite of man.

The pasture was abundant here, and our horses kept in splendid condition, although we had run out of grain some time before. We had arrived in Denver the latter part of February, and reached the Staked Plains about a month later, consequently when we struck the grazing prairies in northern Texas and Indian Territory, the spring was well advanced, and nature had already clothed everything in the brightest green. It was a beautiful country, and we thoroughly enjoyed our passage through it. Along the streams timber now began to appear, and it began to look more homelike to natives of the Wolverine State. After one has passed through hundreds of miles of Staked Plains trees are a welcome sight.

When we reached a point which we supposed was the center of the Indian Territory, or "Nation," as it was called then, we made the acquaintance again of white men, cowboys herding small herds of four or five hundred steers each. They were friendly and cordial, offering us the beef and other supplies we needed.

The steers in these herds were very wild and vicious, and would circle about us for four or five miles. They took umbrage at our red wagons, and often attacked our horses, and would

almost get up nerve enough to charge our wagons. The dog took good care to stay discreetly under one of the wagons, for he was wise enough to know that they would soon impale him with their long horns and trample him under foot. Bands of these steers would sometimes follow us for miles with the most hostile intentions and demonstrations. We would often shoot over their heads to scare them away, especially when they drew too near our horses. Fortunately we were not compelled to kill any of them, but such an alternative seemed desperately near at times.

From this point northward we frequently ran across herders and other evidences of the presence of white men; but none of us even dreamed of the wonderful development which has in recent years taken place throughout this country, now known as the state of Oklahoma, one of the richest and best governed in the Union.

We came through southeastern Kansas, and here ran across a few settlers living in "dug-out" houses. They were fighting a brave battle against adverse conditions of the most gigantic proportions, among which might be mentioned lack of transportation and markets. We passed through Fort Scott, Kansas, which at that time was a small village with a government post located



upon a high hill. It did not look much like the city of today. It was a real frontier town at that time, a very outpost of civilization.

From there we traveled directly to Kansas City, and passed through sections where there were a number of settlers. At that time Kansas City was only a small steamboat landing. I do not think there were over one hundred people in the village. It was a dirty looking prospect, and we tarried there only one night. It is needless to say that it did not resemble the present city in any respect. We pushed on northward into the extreme northeastern part of the state of Kansas, and in making this detour passed through the site of Marysville again, or what there was of it at that time. It had not changed much since our first visit. It could now boast of one small trading store, and a few miserable shacks, and there were signs of trails leading to and from the place.

Here we witnessed the summary trial and execution of an emigrant bound for the Far West in a big prairie schooner. This was our first view of Western justice, and the system of home-made jurisprudence then in vogue on the plains. It was also our last, for which we were truly thankful. There was no grand jury, prosecuting attor-

ney, judge, sheriff, clerk, or bailiff, and there were no lawyers, and, in fact, none of the hitherto supposed absolutely necessary court functionaries and personages; but there were action and procedure of the most vigorous sort, and they arrived at speedy results.

They gave the accused a chance for his life, although it can hardly be said that the jury which tried him would have passed the usual scrutiny or examination; and I am afraid that all of them would have been disqualified from service if they had been questioned closely as to their knowledge of the case and the purported facts, as well as their prejudice and bias against the accused and their ability to give him a fair and impartial trial after having all the information at first hand just a few moments before they were impaneled in the jury box. I am afraid they would all have been disqualified if they had been interrogated on the question as to whether they had formed an opinion as to the guilt or innocence of the accused, for it was very manifest that they *had* formed an opinion very adverse to him, and one which would not give way very readily to any evidence in his favor.

But none of these supposed safeguards to liberty and justice seemed to trouble these jurors

in the least. They dispensed with them apparently without any qualms of conscience whatever, as well as that other one which guarantees in most jurisdictions that an accused person shall always have the right to counsel, even though he be a pauper.

While it had its shortcomings in these respects, I surmise it might have been contended by its inventors and advocates that it had good features which more than compensated for these deficiencies, among which might be mentioned speed, certainty, and finality, for there was no appeal from their verdict (their system of jurisprudence did not admit fallibility), hence no court of errors or appeals had any business reviewing their proceedings. Their decisions were *supreme*, and no earthly body could ever tamper with or reverse them. If they occasionally hung the wrong man by being a little too hasty, they caught the guilty man as soon as possible and hung him, too, and thus doubly protected the community by allowing no suspects to escape the full penalty of the guilty.

In other words, every suspect was presumed to be guilty until he proved himself to be innocent, and he was given about thirty minutes in which to produce all necessary witnesses, and no

process of the court aided him in producing them. Preparation for trial was limited to precious few moments, and in this respect they argued, no doubt, that the commonwealth was equally handicapped in the absence of any necessary witnesses in its behalf. But the truth of the matter was that suspicion filled in all of the gaps and places barren of evidence on the part of the state in cases of this kind, and everything was indulged in the way of presumptions in favor of the state.

We arrived just as they were voluntarily making up the jury, every man self-appointed to the service. I volunteered to defend the poor emigrant, who had neither counsel nor friends, having been halted in his progress less than half an hour before by the "vigilance committee" (which was now to sit as jurors in his case) while he was making some purchases in the little store which had sprung up since we had passed through almost two years before. Settlers too had squatted in surprising numbers all about the hamlet during the intervening months.

No objection was made to my effort to aid the poor emigrant in his fight for liberty. It was purely an uphill effort to prove his innocence, rather than an effort to prove his guilt, for the presumption was against him from the outset.

Notwithstanding my efforts to have matters move along with a modicum of regularity as to procedure, I was promptly overruled by the entire jury, who proceeded, over my objections, to place my client on the stand and question him regarding his guilt or innocence, or any other fact which suggested itself to their fancy or curiosity. He was so frightened that his speech was at times incoherent. It was a dreadful spectacle, and the only saving feature was the fact that it was speedily over, and the verdict carried out.

The testimony developed that while the emigrant had gone into the store to make purchases of supplies, the loafers standing in front of the store had lifted up the rear curtain of his big bowed schooner and found the corpse of a young man lying beneath blankets. He had apparently been dead for two or three days and decomposition had already set in. This state of affairs had resulted in our emigrant being called immediately upon the carpet, and taken into custody, charged with his murder. No evidence of violence was visible upon his person, and the accused emigrant claimed that he had died suddenly in the night presumably of heart disease, and strenuously denied his guilt of having any part in his friend's sudden demise. Questioned closely as to why he

had not buried his partner, he stated that he had carried the body with him in the hope of striking some little settlement where he could give him a decent burial, and mark the spot for his relatives. He stated that he had intended upon coming out of the store, after having taken a glance about the settlement, to announce the death of his partner and ask the aid of the men standing about to bury his friend, but their prying curiosity had prevented this in the manner already related. Thus, perhaps ten minutes of indecision and a mere error of judgment as to the most opportune time to make this announcement, cost the poor emigrant his life, for his statement as to his intention to disclose the facts was disbelieved.

After a brief argument by me in his behalf, in which I did my best to rally the spirit of the old constitutional safeguards of liberty and justice in his behalf, I impressed upon the jury the insufficiency of the evidence to convict, and the fact that the conclusion of guilt was not the only one that might reasonably be drawn from the evidence before them and that it was their bounden duty, although unsworn, to give him the benefit of every reasonable doubt, I laid stress upon the fact that it was the gravest matter

which could ever confront a body of citizens of this great republic, and the results of a mistake in judgment would be most terrible to contemplate, since there was only circumstantial evidence of the poorest sort to dispute the story of the poor emigrant. I closed with as good a burst of eloquence and as much of a peroration as I was capable of, and the jury deliberated in their seats on the rude store benches. He was adjudged guilty of premeditated murder in the first degree, and sentenced to immediate execution, at their hands, by hanging by the neck until he was dead. Thus they became his accusers, judges, and executioners, a trinity of duties seldom combined in any well regulated court of justice.

He was immediately prepared for his exit from this sphere of activity, his boots and coat being removed, and his hands tied behind him with a small rope. Then he was given about five minutes in which to address a prayer to his God, of which he took full privilege; and I am certain that the great Father of all heard his fervent petition. After its close he was asked if he had anything to say before the sentence was carried out.

He made a brief statement as to his name and place of residence in Ohio, all of the salient



facts regarding his early boyhood and young manhood, and that of his partner, who had been his boyhood chum and schoolmate. Then, after reiterating his absolute innocence of the crime of which he had been so summarily and hastily convicted, he charged me with the duty of burying his body, and transmitting the manner of his end to his relatives in Ohio, as well as that of his partner; a duty which I carried out some months later after my return to my home in Michigan. He then thanked me for my kindness, as he was pleased to term it, in trying to aid him to establish his innocence, and then told his executioners that he was ready to meet his God.

A rope, with the customary noose, was quickly adjusted around his neck, and the loose end thrown over the limb of a nearby tree; and this being immediately seized by his executioners, he was swiftly hoisted above ground, and in five minutes' time he was pronounced dead by the jury.

His body was then let down and, with the assistance of the jury, I buried him beneath the Kansas sod, upon which grew the flowers of springtime. I wrapped him in an American flag and some blankets, both of which I found in

his prairie schooner. Thus by the decree of his peers this innocent young settler was in this dreadful manner deprived of his life. His name I shall never reveal for the sake of his family and friends in Ohio, some of whom are yet living in that great commonwealth.

We then buried his partner in a grave not ten feet distant, and thus their bodies will repose side by side in the soil of Kansas until the judgment day.

The mementoes and keepsakes which he had consigned to my care I took with me, and afterward placed in the hands of his white-haired, sorrowing old mother in Ohio. His other property I left in the hands of the storekeeper at Marysville, to be disposed of in accordance with whatever orders might be received from his relatives in Ohio.

We did not tarry long at Marysville, being anxious to leave the scene of such a heart-rending tragedy as far behind as possible. Our entire stop here did not last more than a half-day. I have often wondered what was the moral development of that community, and just how such people had prospered or otherwise. In the country in which I was reared grave doubts would have arisen concerning their capacity for anything



Streeter Repairing the "Reutan"



good, or the appreciation thereof. It was strange material out of which to build a new community, and I would certainly ask to be excused from living among them. I never had any yearning to revisit their locality; but I will confess, however, that recently I have had a sneaking inclination to shunt all of the dollar hog outlaws into such a locality. I believe there they would be given their full deserts without the quiver of an eyelash; and you may rest assured there would be no changes of venue, no appeals, and no stays of execution or judgment.

We now proceeded northeastward through the prairie country and into the state of Iowa, which we found being settled quite rapidly. However, the greater portion of it was yet unoccupied prairie lands, where game and wild fowl were abundant on every hand.

We stopped at Des Moines, which was quite a pretty little city at that time, located on the river of the same name. From there we moved on down this river until we reached Ottumwa, another healthy little town which gave promise of improvement. From this place we took a nearly direct course through the prairie to Burlington on the Mississippi River. This was a thriving river town. Here we crossed the river

on a flatboat, and took a direct route for Peoria, a rather prosperous small town in the great prairie of central Illinois, situated on the Illinois River.

From this point we traveled through the prairie eastward to Kankakee, on the eastern border of the state. We then crossed over into Indiana, on the north side of the Kankakee River and its great impassable swamp, and pursued our way to South Bend, Indiana, a beautiful little city in the rich St. Joseph Valley. From there we crossed shortly into our native state, heading for Three Rivers, Michigan. From there we proceeded to Jackson, thence to Lansing, to Owosso, and ended our journey at Montrose, which we had left in the month of June, 1860. It was now the month of August in the following year.

## CHAPTER VI

### WAR EXPERIENCES

After a short rest at the old homestead, I was importuned to enter into another contract to cut and saw into lumber about two and a half million feet of virgin pine; and early in the fall started the initial work of dredging out about three miles of a creek which I intended to use for rafting purposes.

When I departed on my trip to the west the country was much stirred up over the possibility of the election of President Lincoln. There was some talk of an uprising in the South, but nobody believed it would materialize, and even if it did we thought it would be of short duration. I did not pay much attention to it, for my mind was so taken up with plans for this trip, and my anxiety to see this virgin country was so keen, that it overshadowed everything else.

We did not hear a single word of the conflict during our trip until we reached Fort Scott, Kansas, on the last stage of the journey, for we



were entirely out of touch with civilization from the time we left St. Joseph in Missouri until we reached Fort Scott, where we heard that Fort Sumter had been fired upon and that a conflict was inevitable. From that point on we obtained additional bits of news at every town we passed through, and realized that a sanguinary struggle was on hand, and that the nation and its great executive had a stupendous task before them.

While engaged in cleaning out this stream, preparatory to the logging operations just mentioned, I was drafted for service in the Union Army, together with a friend of mine, Seymour W. Ensign, at that time town clerk of the little village of Montrose.

After bidding adieu to all my relatives and friends, and turning over my timber contract to my father and one of my brothers, I joined Mr. Ensign, and we proceeded to Flint, where we were mustered into the service and assigned to the Fifteenth Regiment of Michigan Volunteers. On our way to the front our first stopping point was Indianapolis, where we stayed over night. From there we were sent to Louisville, Kentucky, where we tarried only half a day, and from there to Nashville, Tennessee. There we were quartered over night in the famous Zolli-

coffer House, which I believe is yet standing and in splendid condition, although punctured by many cannon balls from Union artillery during the war. It was a very large and beautiful structure of the old colonial type of architecture, with great columns and pillars along the facade and in the rotunda, and presented a very imposing appearance. This was my first introduction to Southern architecture.

The next day we were sent to Chattanooga, which we reached some days later. I was a member of a detached corps, usually under the command of General Oliver of Michigan, and never saw the regiment into which I was mustered into the service, and never knew but one other man who was a member of it.

When we arrived at Chattanooga the whole town and surrounding country was filled with thousands of Union troops, and the entire town was cut up with trenches and breastworks.

I was assigned to a graveyard as an introduction to active service, and we made good use of the tombstones in more ways than one.

It was then the month of December, and the weather was chilly and disagreeable, the ground freezing every night and thawing during the day. There was a great deal of rain during the month;

in fact, during the entire winter. This made camp life very uncomfortable, for the soil was a red sticky clay and held the water like a pan, and the poor soldiers in the trenches were obliged to soak up a goodly portion of it. Our blankets froze to the ground nearly every night, and in the morning we had a tough time pulling them loose and drying them out before the fire. Under such treatment they soon became a dirty reddish yellow, the color of the soil. We utilized the tombstones as much as possible for feather beds, but, unfortunately, there were not enough to go round. During the day we used them as shields to prevent the sharpshooters in the Confederate camp from picking us off.

Those were strenuous days, but we were a hardy lot and used to tell the "Rebs," whenever we had a good opportunity, that we did not belong to the Bull Run crowd, and that it would take more than one volley to make us run. Right here I wish to state that, after a lapse of more than fifty years, I did not know a man in our army in and about Chattanooga who was a coward, or who would have run if he had been given a good chance in order to avoid the enemy's fire. Every man seemed to be imbued with the true fighting spirit, which could resist to the

death; and the Confederate troops opposed to us for several months seemed to be imbued with the same spirit. They used to taunt us with the boast that they would clean us up in the end, and they really believed it until we defeated them at Lookout Mountain and Missionary Ridge, and Sherman started on his march to the sea.

During the next twelve months we fought over every inch of ground for miles around Chattanooga. I was in the battles of Lookout Mountain, Missionary Ridge, Cleveland, Knoxville, Chattanooga, Tunnel Hill, Atlanta, then at Tunnel Hill again, and then back at Chattanooga.

The two armies had trenches and breastworks on both sides of the Tennessee River from Chattanooga to Lookout Mountain. Our artillery in and about Chattanooga shelled the Confederates on Lookout Mountain for days while we were hiding in trenches and behind breastworks and crawling up the sides of the mountain at every opportune moment, and protecting ourselves as best we could behind rocks and every barrier we could find. The Confederates were constantly shelling Chattanooga and our advancing army, but after a desperate series of attacks and charges we finally drove them from their positions and forced them into flight.

At Knoxville and Cleveland they stood their ground and gave us stubborn resistance; but they could not withstand our attacks and had to flee in defeat.

Near Cleveland one night, while I was doing picket duty along a highway, I had an experience which did not fall to the lot of every soldier in the ranks. About midnight I heard the sound of horse's hoofs approaching, and concealed myself behind a bush which stood on the very edge of the roadway. When the horse and its rider came almost opposite me I halted them at the point of my bayonet and commanded the rider to give the countersign. As he could not give it, I then compelled him to dismount and follow me, after having first relieved him of his carbine, pistols, and various other accoutrements. He was a well dressed gentleman, wore high-topped boots, and bore every appearance of intelligence and of more than ordinary consequence. He had papers on his person containing information of importance to the Confederate army. He proved to be a famous Confederate spy, and we were very much pleased to intercept him and spoil his opportunities for future usefulness in that line. After turning him over to the proper officers I returned to my post of duty.

While in and about Chattanooga some of the men in our ranks were detailed from day to day to engage in the sometimes pleasant, and sometimes unpleasant, task of foraging for supplies to feed the hungry soldiers. We always accepted this task with pleasure, since no matter how dangerous it always afforded an opportunity for recreation. The truth is we were always glad of an excuse to get away from the muddy trenches of the city; and when we could find turkeys, pigs, bacon, ham, eggs, and other country truck handy, and get away with them without any bullet holes in our anatomy, it was a highly interesting occupation.

But when those old hills around Chattanooga were not filled with "Johnny Rebs" they were usually infested with an organized band of "guerrillas" who wore not the "gray" but the "butternut" uniform. Sometimes they would muster as many as three hundred men and chase us almost into Chattanooga, and many a boy in "blue" lost his life in that hill country trying to get forage into the Union lines.

The nearest I ever came to joining a trip to the great beyond was averted by too sound sleeping on my part. One night with some forty comrades I had been detailed to go upon a foraging

expedition the following morning, but failed to awake in time to join the party. It was a very fortunate sleep for me, for only one of these comrades survived to tell the story of the ill-fated expedition.

While filling up their wagons with the stuff they had collected the foraging party was attacked by several hundred guerrillas, and annihilated, only one poor boy in blue escaping to bring back the dreadful tidings. Next day a large detachment of Union soldiers was dispatched to the scene of the disaster to pick up the dead bodies scattered here and there over the fields, in ravines, behind rocks, trees, and various objects where to little purpose they had sought refuge in defending themselves. While hopelessly outnumbered and handicapped by being on foot while their pursuers were mounted, they nevertheless sold their lives as dearly as possible, as many a "butternut" clad body which had bitten the dust gave mute but eloquent testimony. There surely had been no cowards among them. "Guerrillas" neither expected nor gave quarter. They were considered outlaws, and treated accordingly.

I was usually in a good humor and looked at the conflict from a philosophical standpoint, realizing that it was not a personal struggle



which had its foundation in personal hatred of the men in the ranks. I knew that we served as a matter of patriotic duty, and that if we had had our choice we would not willingly have killed each other for the mere love of killing, and that murder did not lie in the hearts of the men in the ranks of either army. I always realized that my hands and fingers were not given me for the purpose of pulling triggers to end the existence of my Southern brothers, and I believe they felt the same toward us.

On one occasion, however, I was sorely tempted in the heat of passion to kill a defenseless old Southern planter; but I have always been glad that I overcame the temptation just in time.

I had an army "chum" or "comrade" whose name was Fred Buckley, and a braver and more noble-hearted man never lived. I rejoice that he is yet in the land of the living, and residing at Owosso, Michigan. Often we would make up our minds to go on a foraging trip without leave or license, and on these expeditions would stray miles outside the Union lines. It was a dangerous thing to do, and thousands of Union soldiers would have returned alive to their homes and families, instead of perishing on the Southern fields had they not yielded to this temptation to

stray about through the "enemy's country" alone and unprotected. But we were so constantly threatened with death and danger that we grew careless and did not stop to think about either.

One day Buckley and I played "hookey," as the schoolboys call it, and wandered several miles beyond our lines. On this expedition we ran across a stately old planter carrying a sack half filled with something, and I very promptly halted him and asked him what he had in it. He knew perfectly well that we were merely looking for something to eat; but he was one of those stern, uncompromising, and defiant old fellows who would almost rather die than condescend an inch, so he made no reply to my question, but gave me a look of withering contempt that made my blood boil. I then took hold of the sack, but he instantly jerked it from my grasp. This thoroughly enraged me, and I leveled my gun to shoot him. My finger pressed the trigger pretty hard. Then I remembered that he was unarmed, and relaxed my pressure, exclaiming: "You old idiot, I had a mighty strong impulse to kill you, but I won't, since you are unarmed; now drop that sack!" He complied, while Buckley had him covered.

The sack contained nothing but some black

beans, with which the army was at that time surfeited. The fact was that we could stand them for eighty or ninety meals, but we objected to them as a regular diet. "We don't want your beans," I exclaimed, "and if you had acted like a man and told me what you had in the sack I would have told you that we didn't want your old beans, and let you pass on. We are looking for chicken, ham, bacon and eggs, or something good. You may take your beans and go on about your business, but if you have any sense left in you, don't ever act that way again when a soldier asks you a question. I know you don't like us; that you think we are thieves and rascals; but you are entirely mistaken, and will live to find it out at some period of your life!" We then passed on, and he went on his way to some part of his plantation.

All about Chattanooga there were great rocky ridges splitting up the farming country and running back to the mountains, of which they were in reality a part. These ridges were of solid rock, yet all of them were covered with a tolerably thick growth of chestnut trees, with here and there a sprinkle of pine. The valleys which lay between these rocky ridges were often several miles in width, and the farms were

rich and fertile. Sometimes the valleys were very narrow; again they were mere ravines, and quite often roads wound around in these ravines and gulches. It was always dangerous to travel in these ravines or along their roads, for the "guerrillas" or the "Rebs," either one, could pick you off from the shelter of the timber above, so we usually traveled along the brow of the wooded ridges.

On another occasion Buckley and another comrade joined me on a forage, and we strayed miles into the country. We were traveling on the road, when suddenly three "Rebs" appeared on horseback. A thrill shot through us, for a trooper always had the advantage of a foot soldier in such a location, since it was easy to run the pedestrian down, and the sides of the ravines were too steep to climb. We were evidently cornered, but I said, "Let's give 'em a volley!" and we all fired and jumped to the hillsides for concealment if possible, while to our utter amazement the troopers wheeled and fled as fast as their horses could carry them. They evidently thought they were approaching the picket lines of the Union army, and in danger of encountering a large body of troops. Thus two squads of soldiers were relieved from what each regarded as a close call.

I had almost forgotten to relate that I fired so quickly that I didn't take time to place the old musket against my shoulder. I had become so used to wing shooting on the prairies that I sometimes forgot I couldn't handle an army musket that way without disastrous results. Well, when my musket roared, the butt of it hit me on the side of the face and knocked me down. The pain was so great for the moment that I felt as if I had received the load myself. But I could not lie there, so I scrambled to the side of the ravine to find a bush, if possible, to hide behind and get ready for the next volley. It was many a day before my face felt good again.

During the month of December, 1863, about thirty thousand troops were speedily dispatched to Nashville to retake that city, which had fallen into the hands of the Confederates. Here I saw the greatest shipment of living human beings that I ever witnessed. There were about twenty train loads of them, and each train was made up of forty or fifty cars each.

When we detrained near Nashville the Confederates opened fire on us, and we were obliged to get off on the wrong side of our cars, but we used them as a breastwork and poured a strong

fire into the "Rebs," thus protecting ourselves and the train loads which followed us. When all got on terra firma we quickly formed and charged the "Rebs," sending them flying, and taking possession of the main part of the city.

The next few days we spent in whipping them from one fortification to another. They were most strongly intrenched in the east and south parts of the city and on the adjacent hills, especially in the vicinity of the present water tower and the height on which Peabody Institute is located.

Here we saw the negro regiments in action against their former masters, and they fought like demons. We were afraid they wouldn't stand the fire, and might disgrace the reputation of the Union army. So we industriously worked on their fears, inciting them to fight as never before by telling them that here lay their salvation or their Waterloo; that if they were captured they would be slaughtered without quarter. We advised them to run the "Rebs" out of the state if they ever got them going. Well, the truth is they carried out our instructions to the letter. I never saw men fight more valiantly or more doggedly. I never witnessed more desperate fighting, and we chased the enemy for thirty miles.

During the fight I remember an occurrence which impressed itself vividly upon my memory. A shell dropped into our lines and failed to explode. One of the men foolishly picked it up and began picking at the fuse with his knife, trying to discover why it did not go off. At this juncture another soldier, who thought it a foolish thing to do, since it not only endangered his own life but that of others as well, expostulated with him, and finally moved toward him in a threatening manner, as if intending to knock him down. Just before he reached the foolhardy fellow the shell exploded and killed the man who held it and four other comrades, including the one who was expostulating with him. It was a sad object lesson to all who witnessed it.

A few days later we were ordered to take boat for Louisville, and all clambered aboard the big river barges for the trip down the Cumberland River. We had much sport on this trip, which occupied several days, owing to the fact that the boats engaged in racing, as fast as such lumbering craft were capable of speedy action, the object being to see which boat could make the lock at Louisville first. Sometimes when the boats drew alongside each other the boys would reach out and try to hold their rival back.



When we arrived at Louisville we were all hungry, for we had run out of supplies, so we raided all of the wholesale grocery and commission houses along the river the first thing upon landing, and laid in a supply for the trip to Cincinnati, which was our next place of destination.

Here we met an unexpected reception which I shall never forget, and I have always had a warm spot in my heart for that city ever since. It seemed that the entire city welcomed our arrival. No other city ever greeted us with such warm-hearted cordiality. The citizens had organized, in anticipation of our coming, hundreds of places for our entertainment which they called "soldiers' homes," and quartered us therein. All of these places were supplied with ample heat. They were usually churches, public halls, and other public buildings; and since I had left home I had not feasted on such wholesome food. Everything that the hands of loving women could do was set before us every day of our stay in their city. It was one continuous feasting for more than a week.

Friends and relatives of thousands of my comrades who lived in Indiana and Ohio came to the city to greet them and visit with them until

their departure. It was truly a week of joy for all. A humorous experience fell to my lot at this time which must not go unrecorded, even though the joke is on me. While walking down Vine Street one morning a beautiful young lady threw her arms about my neck and hugged and kissed me as though I were very dear to her, exclaiming the while, "Oh, Charlie, how glad I am to see you!" I was almost smothered, and had to disengage her arms almost forcibly, explaining as best I could in the midst of much embarrassment that my name was not Charlie, but that I did not in the least object to adopting it. She had felt sure that I was her brother, of course, or she would never have been guilty of such an indiscretion, and her apologies were profuse. Her brother was a comrade of mine, and she was anxiously expecting him, and in her anxiety to recognize and welcome him mistook me for her brother in "blue." I was in "blue" all right, but not her brother. It almost made me feel blue afterward to think that I was not.

It was now the month of January and the weather was bitterly cold, and we felt it the more keenly having just come from a much warmer climate. We were now ordered to Baltimore, but the railroad companies insisted on com-

pling us to travel in open cars, and this so enraged us that we finally served notice on them that if they did not provide coaches for us we would burn every open car in Cincinnati. They promptly decided to capitulate, and we rode to Baltimore in regular coaches.

Here we camped on the streets where the New York soldiers had been attacked by the populace and the first blood of the war shed on the anniversary of old Lexington and Concord. We found the people hostile yet, and a goodly number of them were taught to respect us before we left there. The gentle art of the Marquis of Queensberry eventually reduced them to a state of decency.

From Baltimore we took boats to Annapolis, Maryland, where we saw fifteen hundred exchanged Union soldiers who had just come in from the notorious Confederate prison at Andersonville, Georgia. The poor fellows were so emaciated and weak from starvation that they could not walk to the hospitals. Three hundred dead bodies were taken from the steamer that brought them. The sight of these poor mistreated men caused the only bitter feeling in our hearts that I recall during the great conflict, for the sight of these poor fellows determined all of the men to

fight the "Rebs" as never before at the first opportunity, which presented itself very soon.

At Annapolis we were transferred from the boats to the new steamer "City of New York," which the government was using for transport purposes. It was a very large vessel, and had three decks. We were packed on this boat as close together as sardines in a tin box. There was only one small alley-way down the center of each deck left unoccupied. This was necessary in order to distribute rations to the men. I had already had some experience aboard ship and persuaded my comrade Buckley to make a run for the extreme stern of our deck, and we were thankful that we secured this position for the thirteen long days of the voyage.

We encountered terrible storms on the Atlantic and made very slow progress. Off Cape Hatteras there was a terrible hurricane, and we did not know whether our vessel was going to weather the storm or not, but we finally arrived safely at the port of Newbern, North Carolina, at the mouth of the Neuse River.

During nearly the entire voyage every man on board was seasick, and some of them developed typhoid fever. The vessel resembled the Chicago Stockyards more than any place I have ever

seen. The action of the storm buffeting the ship about on the waves would sometimes pile the men up in a heap on one side of the boat, and then roll them over to the other side. At other times the bow and stern would seem alternately to drop fifty feet, as though the vessel was plunging over a precipice, or sailing through space, and we would then be jolted violently to and fro. It was an experience never to be forgotten, and one never to be repeated. When we landed at Newbern we were all so weak that we could scarcely walk, and it was several days before we were in marching condition.

From Newbern we moved toward Kingston, North Carolina, engaging the enemy in a sharp fight at Bachelor's Creek. While here I was laid up two weeks in a hospital with a fever, but was able to go on duty again before the army moved to new fields of action.

While at this place I witnessed one of the most horrible catastrophes of the entire war. One morning, just after the mail had arrived from the North, a crowd of men went down to the post-office near the railway tracks, anxious of course to receive their long-delayed mail from home and friends. Just at this time some of our troops were loading a lot of torpedoes on the train,

which they intended to place in the bed of the river farther up stream for the purpose of playing havoc with any Confederate vessels which might follow. There was also a flat car upon which a battery had been mounted to teach the "Rebs" to keep a respectful distance from our transportation trains. Some soldier carelessly dropped a torpedo, and a terrific explosion instantly followed which shook the country for miles around. I was many hundred feet away, and the force of the explosion knocked me down as it did hundreds of others. When we ran to the spot where the men had congregated near the postoffice we found nothing but an enormous hole in the ground. There was nothing to be seen of either car or men; but hundreds of feet away in every direction we soon found the scattered and dismembered remains of more than three hundred Union soldiers, which we gathered up as best we could on rubber blankets, and buried as quickly as possible. It was an awful sight. One body was found in the top of a big gum tree fully five hundred feet from the place of the explosion, and seventy-five feet from the ground. When we sawed the tree down and recovered the body, we found that almost every bone had been broken.

War is indeed an inferno, and that in more ways than one. It is all a sad mistake, and cannot be justified save in defense of home and native land. It is a relic of barbarism and ought to be abolished by civilized peoples. In the same category should be placed the stocks, whipping posts, dungeons, gibbets, guillotines, electric chairs, and the gallows. Human experience has amply demonstrated that they are all worse than useless. Certainly some restraint must be laid upon those who will not respect the rights of their fellow men, but when man attempts to play the role of the Supreme Judge he is a woeful failure.

It is indeed a shame to see so many intelligent men whose consciences revolt against the execution of such laws sit sagely upon the bench, and, pretending to believe in the justice of such laws, make every effort to enforce them.

We have been taught since the days of the old Greeks and Romans to admire that conception of Justice as a *blind* goddess holding aloft a pair of evenly balanced scales, and on the frescoed walls of court rooms all over the land the same figure is represented, but I have come to think that the picture is nearer the truth than the bench would be willing to admit. It is



capable of two interpretations. Justice is indeed blind when it attempts to usurp the prerogatives of the Almighty.

From here we moved on up the Neuse River toward Kingston. We started on the march during the night, and at one place near the river the turnpike ran through a deep quagmire. The night was so dark that we sometimes stumbled against the comrades in front of us as we pushed along. While we were marching past this point one of our comrades evidently stumbled, although we could not see exactly what happened, but we heard him plunge off the high grade of the road and splash into the quagmire below. Buckley and I ran down the bank and fished around with our bayonets in the sticky mire trying to locate him, but we could find no sign of him. He must have plunged into the mire head first and sank immediately to the bottom. Regretfully we were obliged to march on without recovering his body. I have never heard of another accident similar to this during my entire service in the army, nor since that time. This is only another proof of the fact that war is an awful and inhuman struggle. In the ordinary pursuits or enterprises of life, the body of this soldier would have been recovered if it had taken

days to locate it, but it could not be done in the midst of the marching and fighting incident to an army.

Shortly thereafter we encountered the enemy at Wise's Forks in a dense wood, where they had prepared for our coming. This engagement was the most spectacular battle I ever witnessed during the struggle between the North and the South. This was due to the fact that the entire forest of pine trees caught fire and burned, blazing and cracking like fireworks. The fight lasted three days without an interval of rest or time to eat a square meal. Our only rations were crackers and water snatched between volleys and lulls in the firing.

The Confederates had three forts in this pine forest, and from these their operations were directed. They came near flanking us at one time, and did turn our line around until it was at right angles with our former position. The fire in the pine wood at this point in the fighting broke out so fiercely that the enemy was obliged to turn and flee, and we backed out into an open field and held our ground.

One of our batteries lost all but one man, and he brought it out of the wood single-handed and alone with one horse. He then planted the gun

in the open and prepared for business as though he had just commenced to fight, and was soon pouring the grape and canister into the oncoming "Rebs" with deadly effect. At this stage the enemy charged us repeatedly with lines seven and eight deep, and the fighting was terrible. They would almost reach our ranks when twenty batteries, belching forth a perfect hail of grape and canister, would rake their ranks with terrible effect, and when our rifles spoke out at this juncture they always broke and ran. It was more than men could stand, brave soldiers though they were, as brave as ever lived and fought. They could not stand such punishment and advance; but they would retire and, under the commands and encouragement of their officers, repeatedly reform their ranks and come back at us again and again. I never saw more desperate and continuous fighting. At last we had the good fortune to rout them, and you never saw such jubilant men as our boys in "blue." They chased the "Rebs" for fully two miles on the run, as fast as their legs would carry them, shouting and yelling at the top of their voices, as if gone mad.

During this pursuit a ball as big as the half of my thumb pierced my left arm just above

the elbow, and ploughed along through the flesh until it lodged in my shoulder. Afterward it worked down the under side of my arm, and is now lodged near my elbow, where I suppose it will always remain. It has been a part of my anatomy for almost fifty years, so I don't believe I shall ever part with my uncanny souvenir.

We kept right on after the enemy until we reached the river at Kingston, and by this time night had come. Pontoon bridges were thrown over the river and our troops crossed to the other side, landing in a slough that was shoulder deep to a tall man, and neck deep to a little fellow like myself; but the weather was mild and we waded right through it without a pause, and marched into the city that very night. Here we grabbed everything eatable we could find and burned up the houses for campfire wood, as we usually did in such emergencies.

At one place in the city there was a sort of a flat-iron square, or triangle, and in this space had been erected a platform, on which for a long time prior to our coming the suspended skeleton of a Union soldier had been exhibited, with a big placard attached, upon which was printed the words, "Death to the Yankees." We soon abol-

ished this vulgar display of a mean-spirited community; and Kingston was a smoking ruin when our army marched northward en route to Raleigh, the state capital. This incident illustrates the old truth that like begets like.

The Confederates evacuated Raleigh on our approach, and we took possession of the city without opposition of any sort, ate up everything we could find that was fit to eat, and then started southward to see what we could do to the capital city of South Carolina. We were a long time, however, in reaching Columbia, for the "Rebs" were mighty tricky in their movements every step of the way. They would be on one side of us one day, and on the other side the next day. One day we would march twenty-five miles over a road, and then learn that the position of the enemy necessitated retracing our steps, and the next day we would march back. This game of hide-and-seek continued during the entire summer and fall of 1864, and it was winter when we arrived at Columbia, almost at the same time that Sherman's army did, thus uniting our forces.

On the long trip from Raleigh to Columbia I recall an incident which had some humorous aspects as well as serious ones. On this par-

ticular day Buckley and I had the good fortune to rob a beehive along the road, and also to lay violent hands on a guinea hen, and while we were engaged in doing full justice to these unusual delicacies, we heard a great shouting and the popping of rifles in the vicinity of the river along which our army had been temporarily halted. The main body of the army had not crossed the river, but a small force had pushed across to see what luck, in the way of grub, might attend their visits to the neighboring farm houses.

It happened that the "Rebs" unknown to our boys had fortified the hills across the river and they met with an unexpected and warm reception. Buckley and I ran to the brow of the hill on our side of the river, as did hundreds of others, and there beheld the "Rebs" chasing our boys down the hill on the other side of the river. They made it so hot for them that when they reached the river bank they did not halt to disrobe, but plunged in, pell mell, just like so many scared frogs or turtles, and struck out with might and main for their own side of the river. The river was a sluggish stream and quite deep, and they all had to swim for the shore in lively fashion. Although it was real fun to see their

antics in such a predicament, we came to their rescue as quickly as possible by pouring such a terrific fire into the pursuing "Rebs" that they broke and fled for cover. Nevertheless they gave our boys a close call which they did not soon forget.

We then crossed the river and after chasing the enemy from their fortifications, took possession of the big plantation in the neighborhood, and there we camped for the night. In the meantime we gathered up the bodies of our dead comrades, and the "Rebs" as well, and by the light of torches buried them in a big peach orchard, our chaplain performing the last sacred rites for both. All personal effects and mementoes of our comrades were carefully preserved and afterward forwarded to their relatives in the North, as was always the case when it was possible to do so.

In the morning we discovered a big barn filled with sorghum seed, which had been cut with a good portion of the stalk attached to the heads, giving them quite a broomlike appearance. There must have been several thousand dollars worth of this seed stored away, and we had used some of it for kindling fires. Some of the boys in a playful mood began to strike each other with



these bushy stalks of seed, and others taking it up there were soon several hundred of us engaged in a regular sham battle. The sport continued for several minutes, and was a novel sight. Those switches would sting sharply, and a number of us had a good many speckled places on our faces where the seeds had brought the blood to the surface. But everyone took his medicine in good humor, for it was only a frolic among the boys.

There was a great deal of pine timber scattered through the country extending from Raleigh to Columbia, and the enemy nearly always made their stands in the heart of these pineries. There were good reasons for doing so. They had a method of warfare which was decidedly provoking, and novel as well. They would fell trees and turn the tops with their sharpened branches toward us, porcupine fashion. Some times these queer fortifications would be arranged in a solid line for two or three miles. They afforded an impassable barrier, and an excellent hiding-place and protection for the enemy. They would hide themselves safely behind the butts of trees and stumps and fire away at us as we approached their line. We could not charge directly through such a barrier. So we had to unlimber our big



The House Built on the Old Scow where Streeter Lived in 1892



Tent in which Streeter Lived during Frequent Evictions in 1902



guns and shell these obstructions until openings had been made; then we would charge through and give them battle at close range. But this sort of warfare required a great deal of time and trouble, and greatly retarded our progress, when you come to consider the fact that this sort of thing occurred every few days.

From the time we arrived in this part of the South we had no commissary, and were obliged to forage for our subsistence, owing to the fact that we had no adjacent base of supplies. Lee was in possession of the lower half of Virginia, and lay between us and the Army of the Potomac under Grant, so we had to shift for ourselves, just as Sherman's army did on its march to the sea farther south.

We certainly covered the ground in this search for food and there was little that escaped us. The "Johnny Rebs" were daily doing the same, and I cannot imagine how the inhabitants of that country managed to exist after both armies had scoured it back and forth, north and south, east and west, for almost a year.

The feast which Buckley and I had on the guinea hen and the honey was the last one we had for several days; in fact, we did not have what might be called a decent sandwich during

that time. The first night we spent at the plantation across the river, as related, we hoped to find something, but the "Rebs" had been ahead of us, and had made a clean sweep of everything in the shape of grub. The next day Buckley and I foraged far and near without finding anything to eat, and at night we ran across an old deserted cabin and lodged therein. Out in the rear of the cabin where there had recently been a garden, which at that time was devastated and ravaged of everything in the vegetable line, we found three cauliflower stalks, which might have been called a ghostly remnant. That night we feasted on one of these stalks, our sole bill of fare. The next two days we fared no better, each night returning to the cabin and duplicating the meal of the first night, or shall we call it a repast? Nothing then remained in that garden but weeds.

The next morning we bestirred ourselves early, and ran across a cabin where we found three women, and I at once asked whether they had any food for sale, although the prospect did not look promising. They told me that the only grub in the house consisted of two 'johnny cakes,' and I immediately made a bid of three dollars for those two cakes, producing the money as I made the offer. To our great joy my bid was ac-

cepted, and the deal closed instantly. Of course the money was Confederate, but it was the coin of the realm down there. We made short work of those two "johnny cakes" and thereby relieved our famishing stomachs. That day we moved on and fared a little better.

We moved over into the coast country again, and visited some of the big rice plantations. Here we found forage in abundance. One night while we were camped in a big rice field the "Rebs" played a "Johnny" trick on us. During the night while we were peacefully snoozing, they turned the water on the rice field, and by morning we were standing almost knee deep in water. We did not move about during the night, since we could not tell which way to move with safety. At dawn the army broke for high ground, which was then discernible, and a mighty welcome sight. We were in a fighting mood just then, and not finding any army to attack, we took our spite out on some of the people who had played the trick on us, the stay-at-home "Rebs." We burned every house for miles around, and moved on to other fields and plantations.

Many humorous incidents fell across our pathway, some of which are too good to leave unrecorded.

One day while Buckley and I were out foraging we espied an enormous black object in the distance, apparently wallowing through the brush along a small stream near the coast. We could not determine the breed of this animal, as we supposed it to be, until it came nearer; but we waited patiently until it approached nearer to the hillock on which we stood watching it. Imagine our surprise when we found it to be an enormous black negro woman, called a "wench" in that country. She was indeed a ludicrous, if somewhat pitiful, sight. She was much more than the proverbial phrase "half naked" imports, and in one sense of the situation her master might have felt himself justified in not keeping her fully clothed, for I am sure it would have taken twenty-five yards of calico, or any other such material, to make her a simple wrapper. This negro woman was the largest specimen of the African family I have ever seen, and would easily have tipped the scales at five hundred pounds.

Before we discerned that she was a human being, the only creature we could think of was a hippopotamus, but we knew that they were natives of African rivers, and consequently a long way off. When we finally perceived that she was a negro woman, we were convulsed with



laughter at her movements. She waddled along at a very good pace considering her great weight and bulk. When she approached us we saw that she had been fishing, and that she had a goodly string of nice looking fish, which she informed us were "salt watah suckahs." I wished to buy them, and asked her if she would sell them. She replied by asking me a question: "Does you want to buy 'em, massa?" I told her that I would give her a dollar for them, and she replied: "O yes, massa, you can hab de fish," and the fish were ours.

This poor woman's skin was so tanned and burned by the sun and exposure that it resembled nothing so much as the scaly hide of an elephant. If I could have secured the services of this lady the following year for my show, I think she would have proved a drawing card.

But she was not the only specimen of the genus homo that I discovered who would have served me well in that capacity. I saw two young mulatto girls, who were twins, and they were the only ladies of color whom I ever fell in love with. They were albinos, very light of color, possessing snow white hair and pink eyes. They were finely featured, and would have been a splendid addition to any show or museum.

In the same neighborhood where I saw these ladies I found an old gentleman who told me that he was a hundred and five years old, and that he had lived in that vicinity all his life. He pointed out a mound in the pine wood, upon which he asserted that he had made tar in his boyhood, and since that time a pine tree had grown thereon which at the time I saw it was thirty inches in diameter. He would have been a valuable accession to a show anywhere.

At one big plantation I discovered two young colored gentlemen, "bucks," as they were called in that country, who were kept by their lordly master for sporting purposes solely. They were gladiators, and this old Nero loved to see them fight. But their method of warfare was certainly a novel one. They got into a ring for the onset, with heads down like young bulls, and then they came together head on. And the way those heads came in contact with each other caused anxiety to the uninitiated onlooker, who was viewing the sport for the first time. The contact of those heads caused a loud popping sound which might have been heard for fully a block away. No other tactics were permitted. To strike or grapple with each other was a "foul" which would not be tolerated by the referee of the contest. Nothing but

“butting” was allowed, and they made the air resound with the sound of their heads knocking together.

The soldiers enjoyed the sport so much that they kept them in action almost half the night. Of course the negroes were rewarded from time to time by loose coins thrown toward them after each round, which they scrambled for, much like the street urchins of a big city do today. When questioned as to whether the sport gave them sore heads, they replied: “O no, massa, we do it ebbery day fo’ massa!”

At another plantation we ran across a young negro woman who was fully six feet tall, very slim, and as supple as a human being ever could become. She called herself the “Yuba dancer,” and her master kept her for dancing exhibitions solely. She certainly could perform all sorts of dancing stunts and maneuvers, and kept the boys amused for hours at a time.

The negroes were in most deplorable condition throughout the entire South, and were very scantily clad. But abject as their condition was, it was infinitely better than that of the poor white class in that country. The plantation owner was obliged to feed and house his negroes in some fashion, but nobody was bound to provide

these necessities for the poor whites. They had to shift for themselves, and they had nothing to shift with. They had been compelled by dire necessity to work for a pittance, so could never accumulate any property.

At one place I recall seeing a small factory where about twenty-five of these women were employed in weaving butternut cloth by means of hand and foot looms. They were a pitiable sight, and did not earn more than enough to pay for their food and poor clothing.

I never had any serious bad luck while out foraging, except on one occasion, and I must not overlook this experience. One day I ran into an old outhouse on a plantation in the hope of discovering something good to eat, and there spied a barrel in which had been some salt fish. The brine was yet in the barrel, and I supposed of course that there were fish in it also, so ran my hand and arm into the brine in trying to locate them. But it was indeed a trap to catch a sucker, and I bit. There was not a fish in that barrel, and had not been for many a day, which I learned to my sorrow. The odor with which this spoiled brine impregnated my coat and shirt sleeve was simply unendurable, and the boys threatened to drum me out of the camp. I

changed shirts, but the coat sleeve was on the outside, and as bad as ever, so I was obliged to cut off the sleeve of the coat to pacify the boys. Limburger was a whiff from Paradise compared with the overpowering odor of that sleeve. That was the only time I got the worst of it while prying into people's provision houses while out on the forage.

I forgot to tell another good joke on myself, relating to picket duty. On one occasion I was sent out to a swampy locality, and nobody came to relieve me as was customary. I stayed with the job for two days and nights, and finally while sitting on a log I feel asleep, and at the same time fell backwards into a quagmire. When I finally got hold of the log and pulled myself out I was wet and muddy from head to foot. I immediately made up my mind to report to my superior officer, of whom I demanded to know why I had not been relieved as usual. He thought I must be mistaken, or laboring under some delusion. Investigation, however, proved that I was correct, and I was promptly relieved in more ways than one. I told him that I had spent two days and nights out there where there was nothing doing, and I wanted to be transferred to some scene of action in the future. He agreed with me in this

particular, and I was not assigned to picket duty in that locality again.

While in the vicinity of Raleigh, North Carolina, we discovered a very fine plantation home, which at that time was inhabited by its lordly owner and his wife and beautiful daughter. He possessed a large amount of this world's goods, which had not hitherto taken wings and flown away, but which were soon enough loaned wings of "blue" and flew away with our army.

Mules and horses were promptly appropriated, his wagons filled with corn and driven away, and his oxen butchered and served up for food for the officers. He had in the neighborhood of thirty valuable young negroes of the male gender, and about a dozen males and females who were somewhat older; some of them were house servants of a very valuable kind. His sheds and granaries were well stocked with provisions and provender, and his cellar was filled with good things to gratify the appetite of man. Upon investigation we found that an effort had been made to hide some of these good things before we arrived.

But all of this work came to naught, as usual in such cases, for the soldiers were the best grub detectives that ever lived. They had tried out all

possibilities in the hiding line on hundreds of occasions, and were not to be deceived here.

They soon discovered a spot of fresh earth in the yard, which had been carefully sodded over again, and probes, in the shape of bayonets and ramrods, were speedily inserted. Then came the man with the shovel, instead of the "hoe," and he got into action immediately. In the army a goodly number carried shovels as well as muskets, and most useful articles they proved to be, since they were used for a multitude of purposes, among which might be enumerated, digging trenches, making embankments and fortifications, and, last but not least, unearthing hidden grub.

One of these men with the shovel soon uncovered half a barrel of as fine old applejack as ever fell to the lot of a soldier, or any other gentleman, and canteens as well as thirsty throats were filled as long as a drop remained. Buckley and I did not overlook filling our canteens, of that you may be sure.

The chickens, geese, ducks, turkeys, guineas and other fowls, of which there were several hundred choice specimens, had been carefully hidden under the floors of the negro houses by command of the master of the plantation. But prompt and pointed cross-questioning of the young negroes by



experienced soldier investigators soon revealed their location, and sharp commands compelled the production of the hidden fowls. Many of these escaped in the process, but they were soon overtaken. The old negroes gave countermanding orders, but the young "bucks" were afraid to obey them. The presence of numerous guns seemed to have "a commanding influence" over the situation, as Judge Gary once said of the activity of his corporation on the steel industry of the country. It was just so with this steal company.

Buckley and I had arrived at the plantation ahead of the other boys and visited the house first, where we, of course, inquired for food, and were abundantly provided with the choicest viands that had fallen to our lot since we left Cincinnati. The master of the plantation had viewed our coming from a distance, and was so thoroughly frightened that speech failed him, but his good wife and daughter made up for his seeming lack of hospitality.

They apparently divined that we were not marauders at heart, and implored us to save their magnificent mansion from destruction, an edifice which had cost doubtless more than fifty thousand dollars. While we were moved to compassion by their plea, we advised them that we

could not promise anything in this respect, but that we would do our utmost to save it from destruction at the hands of our comrades. We put up a ruse which by rare good fortune worked like a charm, and the mansion was saved. We patrolled the great gallery in measured tread all day long, as though detailed for that purpose by some superior officer, and no comrade presumed to question our authority or to enter the house, although they ran about the premises and unearthed all of the good things as I have already related. We spent the night sleeping on the gallery and had a royal breakfast as our reward. The greater portion of the second day we continued at the post of our self-imposed duty as on the previous day, until our army was miles beyond, and there no longer remained any danger from that source.

During our stay we had ample opportunity to study our hosts, and it was a pleasing impression which we formed of this interesting family. The master and his wife were past fifty years of age, and both highly educated and cultured people. The young daughter had been well educated, and was an accomplished musician, as we could testify from the music which reached our ears on the evening we spent on the gallery. I recall very

distinctly that she was robed in a very brilliant hued silk dress, and her mother was equally well gowned.

The father's tongue did not loosen up until the next morning, when, doubtless for the first time, he felt confident that our ruse would save his mansion. He then became very friendly and affable. At that time I possessed more than three hundred dollars in Confederate currency, and I proposed a trade with him, in case he had any of our greenbacks, which was often the case with such persons. The proposition suited his humor, and as he had almost an equal amount of our currency, we made an even "swap," as the "Johnnies" always termed an even exchange.

When the time arrived for our departure, in order that we might rejoin our army before it got too far ahead of us, these good people filled our haversacks with all the food that we could possibly carry, and bade us God-speed with the fervently expressed hope that we would safely return to our homes when the great struggle was ended, which we all sincerely hoped would not be long delayed.

This was indeed a pleasant incident which gave us at close range a view of Southern character in that station of life, and we did not forget it.

I also fully realized that this country was in reality the native heath of my own ancestors on my mother's side of the house, and that the Marion family in the years gone by were noted for their kindly disposition and gentility. History has rarely recorded the virtues of a nobler character than General Francis Marion, who was always just to his enemies and the poor Indians.

Our boys were indeed glad to unite with Sherman's victorious army at Columbia, and there was general rejoicing. We were now merged into his great army, which met little opposition in any direction. The city of Columbia was a hotbed of the rankest type of "Johnnies" at home that we had ever run across, and their reception was so lacking in cordiality, and their hostility so tactlessly impressed upon us, that it left a bad taste in our mouths, and provoked results which might not otherwise have come to pass. As a result of mutual bad feeling the city of Columbia was, in the language of the ancients, "sacked and burned" before we moved northward.

We proceeded leisurely through the country until we reached Goldsboro, North Carolina, taking prisoners on every hand. There was no united opposition presented. The enemy seemed split into wandering bands, many of whom volun-

tarily surrendered themselves rather than continue the useless struggle. These were disarmed and sent to the wagon train in the rear as prisoners of war, where they were well treated. Everybody felt sorry for them, worn, half clothed, many barefoot and thoroughly exhausted by the long conflict.

At Goldsboro we learned that Lee had surrendered at Appomatox, and that the great conflict was ended. This was welcome news to all, for it meant the end of fighting, killing, maiming, marching, foraging and living like beasts of the field, and it meant much more—it meant the return to *home* and dear ones far away.

We marched northward immediately, our route taking us through Petersburg and Richmond, Virginia, and then on to Washington.

At Petersburg we saw the whole country cut up with trenches, embankments, and tunnels, mute reminders of the terrible struggle which had taken place during the siege and bombardment of that place, one of the most sanguinary in the history of the war, if not that in the world.

I remember viewing the effects of a big solid shot from one of our largest siege guns. It had struck in the middle of a highway and dug a trench six feet wide for a fifth of a mile, then

slid along the surface of the highway for quite a distance, and stopped as though laid by human hands. We buried numbers of dead army mules in this ready manufactured trench, and had plenty of room to spare.

At Richmond we saw the notorious old Libby Prison, where so many "boys in blue" endured terrible punishment and suffering, and hundreds died an awful death by starvation, but we could not tarry at this time to investigate, since our orders were to push on to Washington as speedily as possible, which we did.

We arrived there in June and participated in the grand review of the armies of the nation, the greatest in the history of the world.

I was sick in the army hospital there for two weeks, but was out in time for the review, which I enjoyed as much as any other of its participants, who all felt that we were homeward bound. A great many thousands of the boys were discharged and sent home from this city, but our detached corps was sent to Louisville, Kentucky.

I was sick again at that place and in the hospital, and gradually all my comrades were discharged and sent home, save Buckley and another comrade, and when we were finally able to travel, we hurried to our dear old homes in

Michigan as fast as the train could carry us.

We arrived at home during the latter part of July, and there was great rejoicing at our homecoming. We were truly overjoyed at our reception and welcome, although it was mingled with the tears of loved ones who could not suppress the pent-up flood of emotions which now overcame them; but happily they were tears of joy, not sorrow, such as many other households bitterly endured, and the sunshine of joy speedily replaced them, and happiness reigned supreme.



## CHAPTER V

### A PIONEER SHOWMAN

During the year in which I was recuperating after the war I was looking about for some field of work where there might be an opportunity to reap financial rewards with less hard work than I had found necessary in the lumbering business.

My attention was directed to the opportunities a natural museum or menagerie might offer by a summer garden which a friend of mine was then operating in Saginaw, and in which the principal attraction was a number of wild animals. As a result of my observations in the fall of 1866, I purchased a number of animals for the purpose of operating a traveling menagerie and show. Nearly all of these animals were natives of the State of Michigan. As nearly as I can now recall them there were one bear, two moose, two elk, two deer, two otter, two gray wolves, one black wolf, two lynx, two bobcats, three porcupines, one buffalo calf, two timber badgers, one streaked badger, two raccoons, and

seven kinds of rabbits. In the bird line I had three eagles, three white owls, two gray owls, two English pheasants, and one horned rooster.

As a special attraction I bought a white Normandy hog which was raised by a friend of mine in an adjoining town. This hog weighed fifteen hundred and sixty-seven pounds, was ten feet and five inches in length, and three feet and ten inches in height. I billed this hog in my advertising literature as a white elephant, and I never heard anybody complain about being disappointed in this little fake. The truth is they were as much interested in the extraordinary hog as they would have been in a white elephant, and I would probably have fared just as well if I had told the exact truth in every particular. It would have excited just as much curiosity.

In those days traveling shows were real pioneer propositions, for there were no railroads to transport our show and the cities were few and far between; the truth is, there were not many well-built roads in those days. There were about one hundred miles of mud road to every mile of turnpikes, and the latter were all toll roads which had been built by some company or association and operated for a profit, just like the steam roads are now. We had no palace cars, but we built

some very substantial wagons on that plan as near as we knew how, and they were very comfortable even if they were minus the luxuries of the Pullman coaches. We also had our cooking and dining coach, and it served the purpose admirably.

I also engaged the services of a concert and dramatic troupe in Detroit to round out our program of public entertainment. Later I introduced many special features which at that time were new and caught the public fancy, such as ventriloquism and a number of trick performances, among which were the Marionettes, Punch and Judy, the Hindoo Mystery Box, the Red Dwarf, the Princess Fatima, and many others which I originated myself.

We gave our first performance at the County Fair at Flint, Michigan, and scored a rousing success. The financial returns were so good that I was greatly encouraged with the undertaking.

During the remainder of the season we made the round of numerous county fairs in Michigan, and the intervening towns and cities. We were warmly received on every hand, and the George S. Wellington shows began to acquire a reputation which was quite flattering to a novice at the business. My operations during that fall netted me

over seven thousand dollars, including horses, wagons and equipment. I was greatly elated with the success of the business and made my plans for a wider tour through Michigan, Ohio, Kentucky, and Indiana, as my next field of operation.

The following spring we started out through Michigan, then through Indiana and Ohio, winding up the season in the late fall at Louisville, Ky. This season I carried a small circus with me, and had abundant success during the entire season. During the winter at Louisville I operated a sort of continuous museum, circus, and concert performances every afternoon and evening, and managed to pay expenses, which was considered very good, as most shows were usually out of business at that time of the year and the menagerie a constant expense.

In the spring of 1867 I started early on a tour of Indiana. The weather was rainy and the roads were terrible, in fact, almost impassable. As a consequence we ran behind our schedule all the time and our patronage was almost nothing, since people will not patronize tent shows in rainy weather. It takes a fine day to fill the pockets of the proprietor of the traveling circus with coin of the realm.

We got as far as Indianapolis during the month of June and our expenses had been so heavy that I was actually insolvent, and to avoid bankruptcy I sold five thousand dollars' worth of animals, my entire menagerie, to Adam Forepaugh, and thus eliminated that feature of my program.

I kept my horses, wagons, and a seventy-five foot tent, and continued in the circus and concert show business. We spent the rest of the season traveling through Indiana and Michigan. The weather, however, continued bad during the entire season, and I lost money every day. To keep the thing moving I mortgaged my last property in Michigan, and finally lost that. At the end of the season I was bankrupt and had no further ambition to operate a traveling circus and menagerie over the mud roads of the country, but I had not lost my love for the business, and some years later under more favorable circumstances I made "big money," to use the language of showmen. There were, as you may well imagine, a great many humorous experiences in this sort of a life and some of them must not be overlooked.

At Jackson, Michigan, a smartly dressed gentleman was greatly interested in fooling a bear which was chained to a wagon, and his method of pro-

## *Captain Streeter, Pioneer*

was to hold a sack of peanuts high  
the reach of the bear, to whom they  
very appetizing. Mr. Bear stood the strain  
as he was able, and when the temp-  
became too strong to be resisted longer,  
shed out his paws and drew the man  
him and proceeded to climb up the gen-  
frame, as he would a tree, for the pea-  
He obtained the peanuts and devoured  
easily, but the gentleman who had found  
a fun in teasing him, retired hurriedly to  
his damaged trousers and plaster over his  
cuticle, for the hind claws of Mr. Bear  
penetrated his anatomy just above the knees.  
While traveling through Northern Indiana an  
incident occurred. A very jovial white-  
old gentleman visited the inside of my tent  
afternoon and inquired the price of admis-  
He finally advised me that he desired to  
his whole family to the show, but said  
he had no money, and then followed the  
out by making a proposition to deliver to  
me twelve bushels of wheat as the price of ad-  
mission for his entire family, which he stated  
was a very large one. As wheat was at that  
time worth a dollar a bushel, and could be cashed  
at the local mill, I accepted his proposition,

## *A Pioneer Showman*

and when they turned up at the entrance tent that evening, there were over seventy people who passed in under his protecting wing of friendship.

I learned they were all bona fide descendants and the next night I was very agreeably surprised to see all of them come again, but this time each individual paid the price of his own admission. My old patron warmly commending my performances, and saying that he found them most interesting.

In traveling through the country in those days by horse power our progress was very slow and in the meantime both man and beast must perish. We were in no danger of the famine considering the prices of food which prevailed everywhere through the country-side. Ye countrymen of the cities, listen to these prices of the country. We bought juicy round steaks at six cents per pound, bread at three cents the loaf, brown sugar at three cents per pound, potatoes ten cents per bushel, cabbages, onions, turnips, radishes, peaches, squashes and other vegetables were given us in great quantities for a few complimentary tickets. When passing apple and peach orchards a simple request would result in the response, "Take all you want," or "Help yourselves,



we certainly appreciated the cordiality and warm-heartedness of the good people of the country. Oats for our horses sold at sixteen cents per bushel, and hay at four dollars per ton. We lived on the fat of the land every day, and enjoyed the living.

I recall one instance, however, where we got the worst of the bargain, but took it in good humor nevertheless. The joke at our expense was too good to do otherwise.

It had been a day of slow travel over bad roads, and we were unable to reach the town we were billed for, so contented ourselves by stopping at a country cross-roads for the night, where we attracted a great deal of attention from the nearby residents of the locality. Inquiring of a bystander as to a likely place to buy eggs, a country lady told us that she had a goodly store of the fruit, and would part with them gladly for the market price of five cents per dozen and deliver them; which she did and received the stipulated compensation. The cook in due time proceeded to make use of the eggs, or rather endeavored to do so, but more than fifty per cent of them popped like pistols when broken open, and the stench was so strong about the camp after the basketful had been tried out

that we had to move the wagons some ten rods farther down the road to avoid the odor of the spoiled fruit. We did not obtain enough good eggs out of the entire basketful to go around. We did not soon forget this experience, and it was a source of merriment for many a day. In fact, we thought of it whenever eggs were on the bill of fare.

But think of the prices of produce then as compared with those of today. At that time almost anyone could buy enough to last a whole year with the money that is expended in a month today in the great cities of the country. The high cost of living was not worrying the citizenship of the land as it is now. Men had not generally degenerated into the wage slaves of the capitalist slave drivers, and the markets and industries had not yet fallen into the hands of the exploiting and gambling criminals, nor the beef cattle into the clutches of the ring of great packers; consequently everybody had the necessary money to buy food at reasonable prices, and nobody went hungry.

## CHAPTER VIII

### PIONEER STEAMBOATING

After my disastrous experience in the show business I did not long remain idle. I immediately made up my mind to build a steamboat and engage in commerce on the Great Lakes. This was in the late fall of 1868. Just at that time capital began to interest itself in the great pineries of my native state, hitherto virtually untouched. There has never been anything in the history of the lumbering business of this or any other country to compare with the gigantic operations along the Saginaw River and its tributary rivers and creeks.

Millions of acres of virgin pine of enormous size lay on either side of this broad and sluggish old Indian stream, and for forty or fifty miles on either side of it. Prior to this time Michigan had virtually been little more than a pioneer state of the backwoods type, save for a few urban localities and the lower tier of counties. Now great sawmills sprang up as if

by magic all along the Saginaw River. Thousands of lumberjacks built great logging camps in the great pineries on every hand; and soon the axe and saw in their hands began their work of felling the giant pines that had been hundreds of years in the making, and every creek emptying into the river was filled for miles with great rafts of logs to be floated down to the mills. The Saginaw River teemed with active life as it never had before, and probably never will again. Steamboats, schooners and masted vessels of every description appeared, a veritable fleet, to carry away the golden harvest of lumber, a richer treasure by far than California's far-famed mines of pure gold; and it took almost thirty years of continuous operations on a gigantic scale to exhaust the supply. At one time, for thirty miles on either side of the Saginaw River sawed lumber was stacked in piles twenty feet high, awaiting the advent of vessels to carry it away to the markets of the nation, and to distant shores as well.

Dimly foreseeing this development, I went to East Saginaw, and during the winter of 1868 and 1869 I built a steamboat, which I christened "The Wolverine" in the spring of 1869, and operated her successfully on the Great Lakes

## *Captain Streeter, Pioneer*

In the fall of that year, when I sold her at handsome profit, deciding to try steamboating the lower Mississippi.

I therefore went to Venus, a little town on the Mississippi, opposite St. Louis, Missouri, where during the winter of 1869 and 1870 I built a steamboat, and in the spring of the latter year christened her the "Minnie E. Streeter," in honor of my wife, who did not long thereafter honor me by her presence, for she decamped suddenly without notice, carrying with her seven hundred dollars of my hard-earned cash and accepted an engagement on a vaudeville circuit. I did not see her again for some twelve years, during which time I secured a divorce.

I operated this vessel very successfully on the great Father of Waters, and on the Ohio and Cumberland rivers for a period of three years, handling merchandise and transporting passengers every day. I ran as far south as New Orleans and up the Ohio to Cincinnati, and Cumberland to Nashville, Tenn. I surmise that during this time I encountered every experience incident to such life, and many strange, exciting, and humorous incidents fell to my lot, few of which I will endeavor to relate, just to give you a glimpse of the changing scenes of

that curious life of so many years ago, when watercraft played a large part in the transportation problems of the nation.

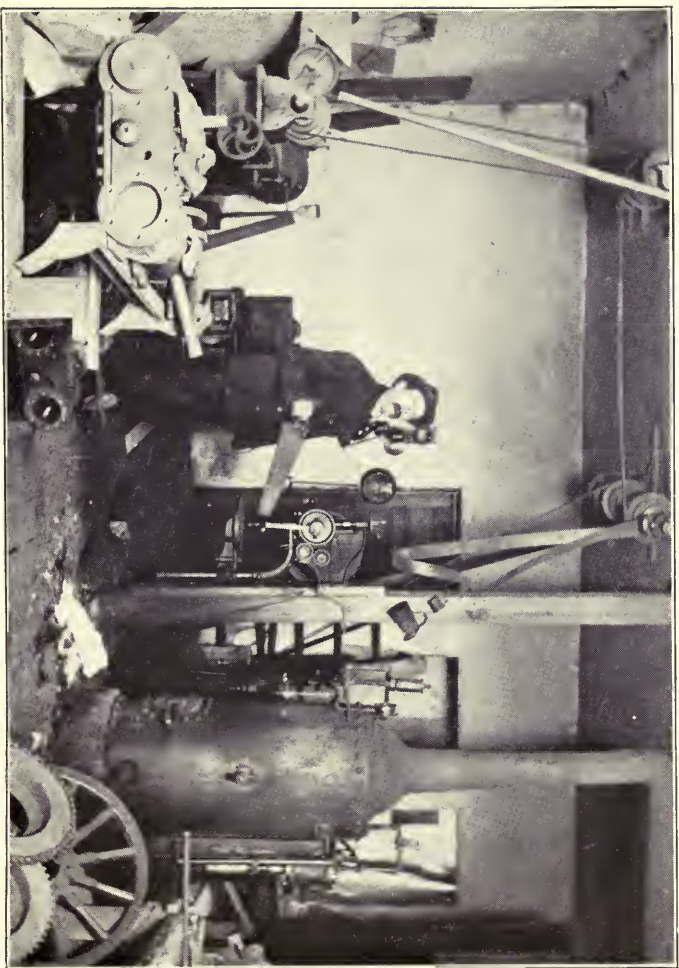
One incident that I recall very clearly happened shortly after my arrival at the wharf at St. Louis, where my vessel was at that time anchored. The war was over, but it seems has not been forgotten by an old "Johnny Reb," who learned in some manner unknown to me that I had been a "Yank," and when I stepped out of the wharf this old "Reb", without any provocation whatever, greeted me with the remark "We've killed bettah men than you ah down heah!" It did not take me many seconds to come to the conclusion that he was spoiling for a fight, and I accommodated him without any further parley. In fact, I did not even speak to him. I had him down on the wharf and subjected to a state of decency and decorum in very short order.

On another occasion, an ex-Confederate captain, who was serving at that time in the capacity of a deputy United States marshal, a very unwilling guest at the mess table, asked me what I thought of McClellan as a general and I told him that I thought McClellan was the worst rebel in the Union army.

My reply seemed to enrage him, and he whipped out a revolver and tried to aim it at me, making a loud threat that he intended to finish my career then and there; but I had divined his purpose when he made the motion of drawing his revolver, and slipping to the floor grabbed up a gun that was within my reach, and covered him before he could take aim at me. I made him drop the revolver and took possession of it, and drove him out on the deck, where I made him stay for several days, not even permitting him to sleep in his bunk. In fact, he stayed there until he was recalled by his superior officer.

When he left the boat he concluded that he would even up the score with me. I had been foolish enough to return his revolver to him, thinking that I was about to end our relations, and that we would part company peacefully. As soon as he had got over the bulwarks of the boat and onto the wharf, he pulled out his revolver and began shooting at me, and never stopped until he had emptied the cylinder, but fortunately for me every bullet went wide of the mark. I did not carry a weapon, and the only thing within my reach was a jar of raspberry jelly, which I immediately hurled at him with





Streeter in his Workroom in the Old House Built on the Scow



all the strength of both hands. My aim proved better than his, for the jar struck him squarely on the top of the head and he rolled over on the wharf as though dead. He was unconscious, and after several minutes had elapsed I feared that he was not going to regain consciousness, so I had my men bathe his head and face with water, and use such methods as we were familiar with to revive him. But he did not respond to such mild treatment and I finally called a carriage and sent him to the hospital, where, I was afterward informed, he was laid up for three or four months with concussion of the brain. I never saw him after that, and trust that he regained his usual health.

A humorous incident fell to my lot while I was transporting flour from Evansville to Chester. My boat got stuck one day on a rock in the river and I couldn't get it off with the load I had on and with the force of men at my disposal, so I decided to return to the city and get the necessary assistance. On my way there afoot I was obliged to go through a piece of woods, where I was attacked by an enormous boar running at large, and just saved my bacon by shinning up a tree, where I was kept a prisoner for fully two hours, when his pigship

grew tired of the sport and sauntered away into the woods, to look for more promising game.

I lost no time in getting out of that locality, but I had not gone very far until I got into trouble again. I saw along the river, which at that time was almost dry, great pools of water which were barely connected with each other by threads of running water, and all about this it looked muddy and swampy. In one of these pools I saw an enormous catfish, larger in fact than I was, and I made up my mind that I wanted that fish. So I disrobed, and selecting the biggest and strongest club I could find, I waded out to the pool where he lay, or rather where he was trying to push himself through the muddy water from one pool to the next nearest one. He was making slow progress, and I had no difficulty in reaching him.

But I made the mistake of trying to head him off, and got directly in front of him in order to land the most effective blow I could on his head. I thought one lick would do the work; but instead of finishing him, it finished me. He gave one tremendous lunge forward out of the mud, and struck me square on the chest. The force of the contact toppled me over backward into the mud and slush in which I was

completely immersed, and put an end to any further desire to fool with that fish. In fact, I did not scrape all the mud out of my eyes for several minutes afterward.

I shall not attempt to describe my efforts to get rid of that mud in order to resume my clothing. It was fully two hours before I could start again. I finally slipped into the rear entrance of a hotel and got cleaned up before showing myself. I then collected a force of men and returned to the boat, which we finally succeeded in getting off the rock, after we had removed about twelve hundred barrels of flour to the shore by means of the yawl. Then we had the task of getting it back again on the steamboat before we could proceed on our way to Chester. But I have never forgotten that day of ludicrous situations, and I think I have laughed over them a thousand times. I never had as many piled upon me in the same length of time before or since.

At that time there was plenty of wild game everywhere along the Mississippi. I have many times stood on the deck of my boat and shot deer looking curiously at our craft, from the shore and from islands in the river.

On one occasion while we were passing a big

eddy I saw the body of a dead man floating on top of the water, and lowered a boat and rowed over to him. I finally got hold of the body and was trying to lift it carefully so that I could get it into my boat, when it was suddenly jerked out of my grasp by some unseen agency. On close inspection I discovered that a big trot line with hook attached was fast to the hand of the dead man and that the other end of it could not be seen. From this fact I figured out that a big fish or some other water creature must also be on the line. So I worked more carefully in my next endeavor to get the body into the boat, and finally succeeded.

Then I had a fight with that unseen force at the other end of the line, and it was a couple of hours before he was worn out and finally landed. It proved to be an enormous catfish, fully as large as the man whom he had succeeded in pulling overboard and drowning. The unfortunate fisher had been seated in a small boat, and at the first plunge of the big fish fell into the water and, not being able to swim, soon drowned, while the boat drifted quickly away. We turned the body over to the authorities and gave them all the information we possessed. We never learned whether he was identified or not.

One night while my boat was tied up at "Island Number Ten," where a few short years before the great battle was fought between the Union and Confederate gunboats and batteries of the forts, I witnessed a strange accident, which never would have been explained if I had not been present.

A big barge loaded with sand was anchored along shore, and I recall that a very large tree overhung this barge, and that the bank upon which the tree was growing had been undermined greatly by the rushing waters, which caused the tree to lean over the river at a sharp angle. During the night I heard a big steamboat coming up the river, and from the sounds floating through the air from its direction, and from what happened shortly afterward, I am satisfied that every soul on board was drunk. The steamboat was plowing along at a rapid rate in close proximity to the bank, and ran into the barge, upon which a solitary man was stationed, and which sank to the bottom of the river like a rock. I knew that the man on the barge must be in the river and ran to the rail of the boat and called to him in loud tones. He was struggling in the water, but managed to grasp the pole which I held out to him, and I



finally succeeded in getting him on board my steamboat. In the meantime the steamboat which sank his barge continued on up the stream without a pause, while the shouts and sounds of music and dancing floated back to us on the breeze.

Fortunately for the owners of the barge, I had secured the name of this steamboat, and they were afterward able to recover damages from its owners. The next morning I discovered that the big tree which had on the previous day overhung the barge was also missing, so the boat must have been traveling pretty close to the bank, at least close enough to topple it over. The banks of the river at this point were so steep and high that it was impossible for a man to clamber up them, and my struggling friend would undoubtedly have perished in the Great Father of Waters but for my watchfulness and timely aid.

New Orleans was a very beautiful city in those days, and a very busy one, but in the business in which I was engaged I naturally saw more of the river front than of any other portion, and that consisted principally of negroes, watermelons, sugar and cotton. There were thousands of black roustabouts engaged in

handling sugar barrels and cotton bales on the wharves; and it was an interesting sight to see them loading and unloading vessels all day long and far into the night. There were hundreds of little pickaninnies on every hand, and they were certainly an interesting sight. It was difficult to determine which they loved better, brown sugar or ripe watermelon.

I recall an occasion on which I saw four little bareheaded and barefooted pickaninnies engaged in devouring a huge watermelon fully three feet long, which probably cost them about ten cents, and for which they had no doubt blacked a good many pairs of boots. The manner in which they gobbled up this watermelon could only be compared to that of so many little pigs. The melon was split in two the long way and lying on the ground. A part of the time the little black youngsters had pieces of the watermelon in their mouths, and the remainder of the time they had their mouths in the melon, playing the role of pigs to perfection. This was before the day of snapshot cameras, consequently I was not able to preserve the picture, save in my memory, but I would give a good many dollars if I now had a genuine reproduction of this scene, as well as of many

other scenes which I saw in that Southern metropolis.

These little blacks were almost as numerous as flies in the vicinity of the sugar barrels, and there was nearly always an abundance of the latter about the wharves. Quite often a barrel or hogshead would be short, or the barrel injured in some way, and in either case its contents would be emptied onto a large tarpaulin until the barrel was fixed or the deficiency in sugar made up, as the case might be. These little blacks were always looking out for just such an opportunity as this, and no occasion of the kind ever escaped them. They always managed to grab a few handfuls, and, as soon as opportunity offered, they were sure to crawl into the hogshead or barrel. All the time, however, they would be busily engaged in prying off hardened cakes of sugar from its staves, for usually the inside of such barrels was very thickly plastered with them, since the sugar was always very damp when shoveled into the barrels.

When driven out of the barrels and hogsheads these little darkies presented a novel sight; their hands, feet, faces, hair, and what little clothing they usually wore, were plastered with a good

coat of sugar, which was sometimes almost in a molasses state. But little did they care, for the flies soon overwhelmed them with evidences of keenest affection. I have seen many lying among the cotton bales literally covered with flies. Any other human being would be unable to sleep a minute under such conditions, but the flies did not hold it within their power to disturb the siestas of these happy-go-lucky little blacks.

In the river, north of the city, there was at this time a veritable flatboat town, where hundreds of flatboats were moored to the banks, and stores and shops of every character flourished thereon. It was a strange and novel life they led under these conditions, and not conducive to good citizenship in the least.

I remember one boat dweller and his son, a couple of Greeks, who conducted a little plaster of paris art figure factory on their boat; and I became passingly acquainted with them, having visited their boat more out of curiosity than aught else.

One night I was awakened by screams and the noise of a commotion in the Greek houseboat, and with the engineer of my boat I made a hurried trip to the scene of the noise. Here we surprised a burly negro in the very act of

killing the Greek boy. We covered the negro with our revolvers and took him prisoner, and then learned that he had already murdered the father of the boy with a large iron bar with which he was trying to kill the son when we arrived on the scene. The boy had been struck once by a glancing blow of the bar, but had managed to escape the full force of it. In the negro's pockets we found the money of the dead Greek, and we turned him over to the proper authorities some three or four hours later. He was given a speedy trial and found guilty by a jury and sentenced to be hanged. We did not tarry to see the sentence carried out, but learned that he was duly executed in the name of the law, which we trust was dignified thereby.

I finally had a good offer for the "Minnie E. Streeter," and as I was at that time ill with a fever, I sold the boat at a profit and closed out my operations on the lower Mississippi. I then went to South Chicago, where I built a boat which I christened "Catherine." This boat I operated for a few months on the Great Lakes and then sold out at a handsome advance on her cost.

## CHAPTER IX

### IN THE NEW WEST

Shortly after the sale of the "Catherine" I went to Bedford, Iowa, where I started a livery stable and omnibus line, and put up a substantial hotel building, which I operated as soon as completed. I made many friends among the citizens of this thriving young city and the traveling public as well. But I made an enemy of the rival hotel proprietor, who also operated an omnibus line, because I carried all passengers to the hotels free of charge, while he operated strictly for profit. So he made up his mind that he would put me out of business by foul means since he could not by fair.

He had a big rawboned young fellow by the name of "Mont Crabb" as his omnibus driver, and he soon stirred him up to provoke a fight with me, which was staged on the platform of the railroad station. Crabb was younger and much larger than I, and he gave me a hard fight up and down the platform for several minutes, but I finally succeeded in knocking

him out, and he immediately resigned his job and bothered me no more. Then a big negro from St. Joseph, Missouri, a nearby city, was hired for the purpose of retiring me from the business, and I afterward learned the exact amount that he was paid for the piece of work. One morning at the depot a traveling man handed me his grip and stepped into my omnibus. At the same instant the colored fellow grabbed the handle of the grip, and attempted to take it from me. He finally pulled so hard that his end of the handle gave way, and I was pulling so hard in the other direction that when his weight was removed the grip flew entirely over the top of the 'bus and landed in the middle of the street, then deep with mud. The traveling man protested in strong language at such misuse of his property, but at that time I had no opportunity to mollify him. I had other business to attend to just at that moment, for I knew that the hour of conflict between the black and myself was at hand, and I lost no time in getting into action.

We fought all over the platform, raining blow for blow upon each other without any sign of failing strength on either side, and without either one being able to land a knockout blow. It flashed



through my mind at this juncture that I had always been told that colored men could be hurt worse by a blow on the shins than by one on the head, so I concluded this was my chance to try out the experiment, and it worked like a charm. From that moment on his eyes began to pay more attention to the movements of my feet than to my fists, and by and by I caught him napping and landed a blow which rolled him off the platform and onto the steps of my 'bus, where I soon reduced him to a state of submission.

This was the longest fight I ever had with any one man, and the longest I ever saw with one exception. At Windsor, Canada, I saw a fight between a white man and a negro which lasted longer, and finally resulted in the death of both. When these two men, crazy with anger, were unable to vanquish each other without weapons, they seized pitchforks and made quick work of each other. Our fight lasted for fully twenty minutes, and during this time the sympathies of the people about the depot and on the train standing nearby were warmly manifested in my behalf, doubtless due to my color, and the further fact that I was much the smaller man of the two.

After this I was not molested in the operation of my 'bus line, and I certainly appreciated the change in the program, for I did not desire any controversy of the kind that had been forced upon me, but I did not propose to be driven from an honest enterprise by threatening and bulldozing methods. That course of procedure never worked on me, as I think a number of Chicago gentlemen can well testify.

Iowa and northwestern Missouri were comparatively new country at that time, and formed the rendezvous for many notorious characters, the most prominent of whom were the James and Younger brothers, whose boyhood homes were in the wild hills of that part of Missouri. They were free characters throughout all that country and none dared molest them, for the majority of the people of that locality were their friends and ready to aid them at a moment's notice. In fact, they were really popular gentlemen, regarded much as Robin Hood and his band were by the common folk of the country throughout which they operated, and among whom they found safe refuge several hundred years ago.

I often met the James boys at Morgantown, Savannah, and St. Joseph, where they circulated

openly and made no effort to conceal their identity.

One night two traveling salesmen from Chicago, Billy Perdue and Jack Best, were stopping at my hotel and thought they would like to break the monotony of the evening by attending a dance at Morgantown, a few miles distant. So they hired me to drive them to that place, which I did. I also attended the dance, since I was fairly well acquainted in the vicinity. The James brothers were at the dance, and were personally known to Best and myself. We presumed that Perdue knew them also; but in this we were mistaken, as we later learned to Perdue's sorrow.

During the dance Jesse James, who in some manner unknown to any of us, had learned that Perdue had collected several hundred dollars for his firm during the day, approached Perdue and said, "What would you do if the James brothers were to tackle you?" Perdue replied in a boasting manner that he would take care of them, not knowing the identity of his interlocutor. Angered by his remark Jesse James immediately covered Perdue with a revolver, at the same time revealing his identity to him, and ordered him to hand over the money he had in his possession. Perdue, who was much frightened,

produced over sixteen hundred and fifty dollars and passed it over to the American Robin Hood. James then gave back fifty dollars to Perdue, and told him to pay his hotel bill and wire his house that he had been robbed by the James brothers; and, as a parting word of admonition, he told Perdue not to be so free with his tongue in the future when he was among strangers, which advice, the latter no doubt followed forever after. If we had known that Perdue was unacquainted with the presence of the James brothers, and that it was dangerous to talk about them in that community, we would have posted him in advance, but not being aware of his ignorance we had given him no warning.

I operated the hotel and livery business at Bedford for a period of about three years, and then sold the livery business at a profitable figure, and shortly afterward a stranger unexpectedly made me an offer of ten thousand seven hundred dollars for my hotel and furnishings, and I accepted his offer. At the end of thirty days the deal was closed and he paid me the purchase price in cash at one of the banks of that little city. I then told my sister, who was living with me and assisting me in the operation of the hotel, to pack our trunks at once, since

I had decided that I wished to go to Chicago. We left Bedford and I have never since visited the place, although I cherish many friendships I made during my three years' residence there.

## CHAPTER X

### ENTERTAINING A CHICAGO PUBLIC

On my return to Chicago I looked about for several months before deciding on making any business investment, and finally purchased an interest in the old "Woods Museum," already famous as a place of local entertainment.

During the six months that I was half owner of this place, such famous personages as Victoria Woodhull, Tenny C. Claflin and many others appeared there. The latter afterwards married a member of the English House of Lords, who recently died and left her an enormous fortune. She was one of the pioneer advocates of woman suffrage, and created quite a furore in Chicago when the doctrine was then new.

After a few months I sold my interest in the museum, and with "Dutchy Lehmann," visited many fairs throughout the country during the fall of that year, selling our wares from stands after the manner of modern fakirs. We were at the Kansas State Fair when the James brothers

robbed the ticket office of the gate receipts of the day, and accidentally killed a young woman with a stray shot.

On our return to Chicago I purchased an interest in the "Apollo Theatre," then a very popular place of amusement, while Lehmann opened up a cheap store in a small building on the northwest corner of State and Adams Streets, afterward to become famous as "The Fair"; but neither of us had any premonition of its coming prosperity or wonderful development. Lehmann and his friends always patronized my places of amusement, as did "Old Hutch," the Wheat King, Oscar Fields, George M. Pullman, and many other famous characters of that day.

Lehmann had an English floorwalker at this time who was also a frequenter of my theatre, and he proposed a novel feature on one occasion when nothing unusual happened to be booked for the evening. He wagered a hundred dollars that he could whip any dog which might be put into the ring with him, accepting all comers, and he lived up to his contract to appear ready for business. He was a baldheaded gentleman, and met the dogs on all fours, after their own standard; but all of them declined to fight when put in the ring with him; so he won the bet



without a scrimmage. The police had been interested spectators of the bloodless contest, and after the close of the entertainment arrested him, but I gave bond for his appearance in court the next morning.

I don't even remember the charge placed against him, but I do remember the questions propounded to him by the court, and his answers. The scene, though brief, was better than the previous evening's entertainment. The judge's questioning after the prisoner's arraignment proceeded like this:

Q. What is your nationality? A. I have none.

Q. What country were you born in? A. I was not born in any country.

Q. What state were you born in? A. I was not born in any state.

Q. What city were you born in? A. I was not born in any city.

Q. What town were you born in? A. I was not born in any town.

The court at this stage of the proceedings was both angry and disgusted, and made no effort to conceal it, blurting out the remark, "Your fine is one hundred dollars!"

The prisoner, not in the least perturbed, then

said to the court, "Your honor, you didn't ask me where I *was* born."

The court, then following this cue, addressed the suggested interrogatory to the prisoner, who replied, "Your honor, I was born on the high seas." The court then addressed the clerk of the court, "Mr. Clerk, remit the fine"; and to the prisoner he said, "You are discharged. Go home and fight all the dogs you wish to."

The prisoner then thanked the court and joined his waiting friends, among whom were Lehmann and myself, who joked him unmercifully over the affair, which he took good humoredly.

I afterward sold the Apollo to Mike McDonald, at a handsome profit, and retired temporarily from public entertaining. McDonald made an enormous fortune out of this theatre and other kindred ventures, and became famous in his old age as an elevated railroad magnate. He has since passed away.

## CHAPTER XI

### BATTLES ON THE LAKE FRONT

After these days of amusing the public were over I turned my attention once more to the old love and lure of adventure in strange lands, or rather I made preparation to do so, but fate willed that my adventures were to be nearer at hand and of an entirely different character than I had contemplated. They were nevertheless sanguinary enough to test the eternal qualities and the fighting caliber of any man who ever lived.

I had met an old friend, Captain Bowen, who had spent many years in Honduras, and during that time had ingratiated himself with the government of that country, securing large concessions of land and a commission in the army of that new republic. He advised me that the government very much desired to have regular steamboats plying on certain of its rivers, and that if I would build a boat for that purpose and navigate the same in accordance with their desires that I could secure a very large grant of valuable land and ample compensation for my services, and

at the same time build up a lucrative business. The plan was very attractive, and during the winter and spring of 1886 I built a steamboat, which I christened the "Reutan" late in that spring. I determined to try the steamer out on Lake Michigan first, and fitted her out for passenger traffic, making regular trips to Milwaukee and other local ports every day for several weeks.

On the 10th day of July, 1886, I took a private party to Milwaukee, and during the trip the lake became exceedingly rough and stormy; in fact, so much so that the party decided not to risk the return trip, and we endeavored to return to Chicago alone. By the time we reached Racine we encountered a terrific storm which did not abate its fury for many hours, and by that time the "Reutan" was a badly damaged wreck lying on a sandbar off Chicago harbor, behind the government breakwater on the north shore.

It was about ten o'clock at night when we drifted near the breakwater, and just at this juncture the engine broke and became useless. We were then at the mercy of the wind and waves, helplessly drifting about. Fortunately, or unfortunately, just as you may choose to judge by subsequent events, the wind drove us behind the breakwater, narrowly missing a collision with

the pier. Just as soon as we were clear of this danger I cast anchor overboard, hoping to prevent the steamer from running aground on the beach. But the sea was so strong that it not only broke over the boat in tremendous waves, but it also dragged the anchor across the bottom of the lake, which at that point was not very deep.

The boat finally stranded in a shallow body of water when four hundred fifty-one feet from the shore. This was at three o'clock in the morning of the following day, and we had gone through terrible experiences since drifting behind the breakwater shortly after ten o'clock on the night before. During this interval the waves dashed over the boat hundreds of times with terrific force. I was the only man on deck. My wife and the crew were driven to the berths for safety, and I tied a strong rope about my waist and resolved to witness from the decks whatever happened. Twice I was swept overboard by tremendous waves, but managed to climb back to deck overhand after the wave had receded and I could approach the boat in safety. The waves soon dashed in every door of the cabins, and swept through the boat from end to end, and from side to side. The steamer was flooded.

I had a lifeboat and a liferaft on the vessel

but both were swept overboard and landed high and dry on the nearby beach, where they were noticed by friends in the early morning. The furniture, chairs and sofas were piled up against one end of the cabin by the force of the waves sweeping through the inside of the vessel. Finally the boat was pounded so hard on the sandy bottom of the lake that the bottom of the boat was rent, and the seams of the hull opened up. After this it soon filled with water and sand and sank to the bottom, which fortunately was close at hand, for the hull was about twelve inches above the water line after the sea had subsided, and the bulwarks were about two feet above.

Shortly after dawn friends on the beach discovered our plight, and utilizing our lifeboat, which they found thereon, came to our rescue and brought us ashore. By this time, however, the sea was abating and our real dangers from that source were over. Our rescuer was an old friend by the name of Dugan, who has since passed away.

Investigation proved that it would be impossible to pull the boat off this sandy bar with a tug, and that she was too badly damaged in her frame and bottom to float. I decided that this

location was to be my home, and I have never revoked that decision from that day to this. I did, however, make plans at once for the ultimate rescue of the vessel, which I knew would be a hard and tedious task; but I had often encountered difficult tasks and consequently this was not altogether a new experience. I buckled down to the work very shortly thereafter. I discovered that sand had drifted and banked up considerably, considering the space of time that had elapsed, behind the boat, that is between the boat and the shore. I concluded that I would build up a rock wall on the sea side of the boat and thus aid the deposit.

I then entered into contract with several excavators and contractors who had refuse stone and brick which they wished to dispose of, and they brought hundreds of loads of these materials to the shore at the point nearest to the vessel, and I there reloaded them into the yawl and took them out and dropped them around the boat. By the end of November I had raised a bulwark about the vessel which had caused sand to fill in entirely beneath it so that I could put jackscrews under it and gradually lift it above the water. During this process I was also filling sand beneath the boat as I lifted it up inch by inch.



This was a very slow process, but the only one at my command. The boat was now three feet above the water, and I already had a small island constructed by my own efforts, which island was long to be my home. In the meantime I had also repaired the cabin so that it was once more habitable and free from all evidences of the terrible storm, and now that winter was at hand we felt that we could endure the rigors of that location in its cozy interior, and we did. For we lived in the boat many winters and summers.

It was a novel sight, however, during that first winter. The sprays of every storm dashed entirely over the vessel, and freezing weather gave our home a complete coating of ice which froze in the most grotesque figures. It was indeed a natural curiosity, and friends and strangers often came down to us across the ice to see if we could really survive such an experience. The police came frequently to see us during the first winter, and were far more welcome visitors than they afterward became, as you will readily understand by and by.

This boat remained our home until the spring of 1893, by which time I had thoroughly repaired and relaunched her, and rechristened her as well. This time I named her after my wife,

"The Maria." I then engaged her in passenger traffic from the city to the World's Fair Grounds, and enjoyed a very profitable and pleasant patronage. After this relaunching of the vessel our home for some time was on an old scow upon which I had built a two-story cabin, all of which stood upon the ground I had in the meantime constructed and built up from the bottom of the lake until it stood high and dry above the water, a process which I shall now describe, as well as the extent of it.

At the time of the relaunching of the vessel I had filled in all of the space between my boat and the shore to the west and south, and much farther to the northward, as well as more than thirty rods to the east and northeast. This was a territory of one hundred and eighty-six acres, long known to everybody in Chicago as "Streeterville" and as the "District of Lake Michigan," the latter name having been given to the tract by myself, the former by the people of Chicago and vicinity because of my creation, occupation and ownership of it. It bears both names to this day, not only among the people, but in the daily press, the public records and documents of the city, the county and the legislature of the state of Illinois.

At the time I stranded, building operations on a grand scale were in operation in all parts of the city which had been devastated by the great fire some years previous, and by this condition I was especially favored. Excavators and contractors were very desirous of obtaining dumping grounds as near as possible to their work for all superfluous earth, rock, brick, and refuse which were of no use to them. My filling operations were particularly inviting to them, and I had no difficulty in making contracts with them by which I received millions of loads of refuse and earth with which to fill in the territory about my island home, as I have already related. Some of them even paid for the privilege at an agreed price per load.

Notwithstanding these conditions it was a slow process, owing to the adverse action of the wind and waves. Sometimes after I had brought several acres above the water line, a storm would wash them away in a single night, and I would then be obliged to fill up again by the same slow process of unloading wagon after wagon for weeks at a time. There was one recompense flowing from these disasters of the wind and waves; there would usually be uncovered considerable quantities of lead, zinc, copper and

other valuable junk, which lying exposed in the shallow water, I soon converted to possession. Occasionally I would be fortunate enough to find silver and gold coins, which at that time came in very handy, since I had no fixed income. I realized, however, that I was building a very valuable homestead which in the end would fully repay me for the expenditure of my time and labor, and I am yet living in that hope, a hope which has been long deferred so far as any real enjoyment of my possessions is concerned.

After I had virtually completed my filling-in operations as related, I had the tract surveyed and platted, and it was at this juncture that I learned of the displeasure of a lot of millionaires who imagined that the time was ripe to engineer a conspiracy to rob me of my hard earned property, and their operations will be fully detailed as we go along with this story at various stages.

At the time I was stranded, the location of some of the homes of the millionaire colony of the North Shore were not particularly valuable, nor even desirable for residence purposes. The entire frontage for rods back from the shore was low and swampy, and the location of the present palace or castle of the Palmer family was familiarly known as the "stink pond," because of

the universal use of the pond there to throw garbage and dead animals into, and the odoriferous notoriety of the location as a natural consequence. All this was later filled in, but it was for many years an undesirable locality.

And while we are surveying this locality it might be well to tell the truth about the occupation of the gentlemen who afterward claimed to own these tracts of land. All of them were in fact "squatters" far beyond the meander line of the lake, but that fact never seemed to disturb them, and theirs were the loudest voices to proclaim me a squatter and a usurper, when as a matter of fact there was not a particle of land for me to squat on when I was stranded at the place, as I have related. This only illustrates the truth of the old saying that people who live in glass houses will often be foolish enough to throw stones at others. In this instance the hostility was the outcome of a despicable and avaricious personal greed and envy. The great value of all the lands in this locality was the result of the later influx of thousands of people in close proximity on every hand, and not due to anything which the owners did upon the land.

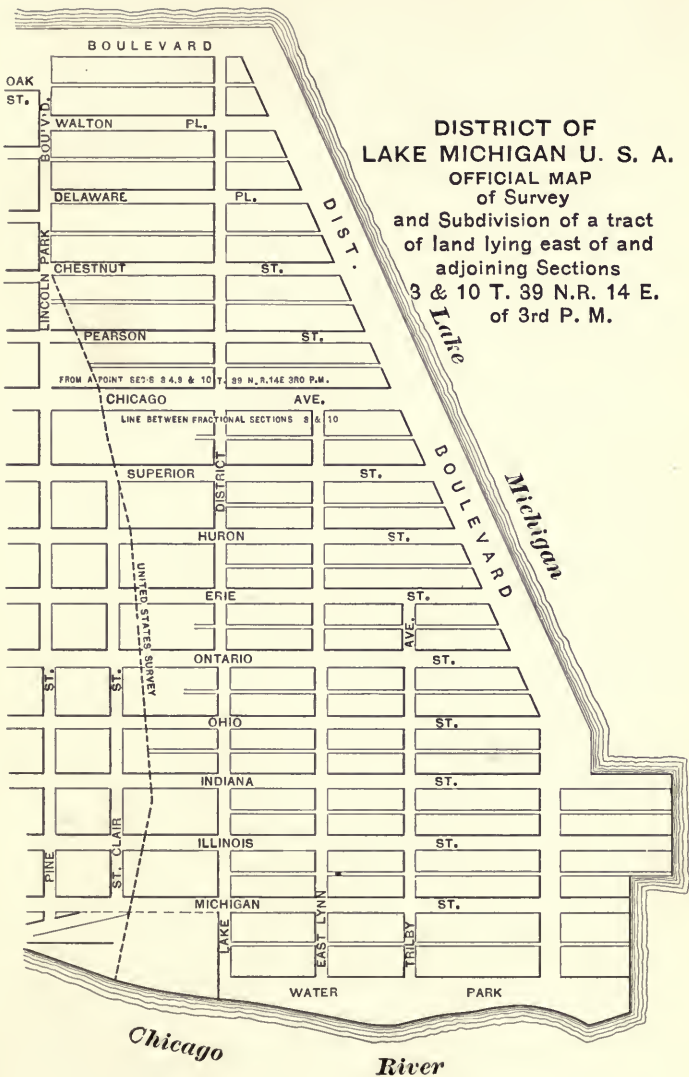
When the millionaires came to realize that I was indeed a landowner they immediately set

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actively to work to form a conspiracy to rob me of my possessions by fair means or foul; and, as you will perceive, their efforts were confined principally to the latter. If they ever made a truly lawful move I never heard of it, and certainly none of them had any vestige of claim which was worthy of the least legal consideration to a particle of land I had built up from the sea. I will demonstrate this more fully later on.

Notwithstanding the existence of the "Forcible Entry and Detainer Statute" since the days of King Richard, several hundreds of years before, these criminally inclined millionaires thought their sweet wills ought to be superior to the wisdom and justice of the philosophy which underlay this statute, and which had been recognized not only by the people of that day, but by the generations which had succeeded them.

This statute forbade landlords, or anyone claiming the right of possession to any lands, to take the law into their own hands and forcibly dispossess the occupant, but compelled them in all cases to institute an action in some court of proper jurisdiction, so that all ejections might be obtained by due process of law alone, and not otherwise. This also gave the occupant his day







in court, and none but outlaws at heart have ever at any time disputed the justice and wisdom of this salutary statute, which has now been enacted into the statutory law of every state in the Union.

These millionaires dared not come into court and bring a suit to dispossess and eject me under the law, because they could not show that they possessed any title whatsoever to a foot of this land, hence they resorted to other tactics of the unlawful kind and character.

Their first move was to hire numerous thugs and private detectives to forcibly dispossess me, and when I successfully resisted with due force, then they would go into the old so-called "justice shops" and charge me with the infraction of petty laws of the misdemeanor type, such as assault, unlawful assembly, rioting, disorderly conduct, malicious trespass, and a host of similar offenses. They were never able to prove any of them to the satisfaction of a judge or jury, for I was always able to establish the fact that they had come down there to forcibly dispossess and eject me, and that all of the consequent trouble had arisen over my defense of my own home and the rights attendant thereto.

These defeats seemed to sting the millionaire colony to the quick, and they resorted finally to

more desperate and more criminal measures in order to accomplish their infamous purposes. They did not come quickly to this latter program. It was only after a long series of battles upon the land and subsequent defeats in courts, that their murderous purpose was finally formed. Realizing that they could not easily eject me by hiring these bands of thugs and detectives to engage in fisticuffs with me, they resolved to eliminate me entirely from the scene of action and from this earthly life as well.

Their plan was to have a gang of thugs and detectives of bad reputation engage me in a conflict, and while I was thus engaged have some trusty on the outer fringe of the crowd carefully pick me off with a well directed shot, and thus forever settle my claim of ownership to this land. This was certainly a novel scheme to adjudicate the merits of the controversy; but it was destined to failure, for they had counted not only without their host, but without the necessary knowledge of human nature and the proneness of murder and its secrets to "out," as has been said from time immemorial.

Their plans were well laid, but they did not discover the janitor of their club house lying in such a position that he overheard the whole plan,

in which he was not a participator in any way. He was a true man, and while he did not wish to openly denounce them and lose his position, he did not wish them success in their unholy endeavor, and soon disclosed their plans to me under promise of secrecy on my part. This I readily assented to, thankful to him for his humane instincts and friendly wishes, though an enemy to his own employers. I was glad to get the tip and thus be prepared to save my life.

Their plan on this particular occasion, as related to me by this old Swedish janitor of their club, was to have a gang of thugs and private detectives visit me at three o'clock in the morning and engage me in conflict, and under cover of darkness and freedom from outside interference with their unlawful acts, and also from the eyes of the disinterested world, to hand me my passport to the Great Beyond. But, as I have said before, they counted without their host. Perhaps they were not cognizant of the fact that I had already undergone thousands of dangerous experiences long before I ever landed in Chicago waters; and that I had successfully dodged a million sharpshooter bullets of the "Johnnies" in the defense of this Union and its imperishable institutions, a braver band by far than these gangs

of criminal crooks; and that I had not forgotten the cunning and strategy gained by years of danger in a noble cause. My father always taught me that a man's home was his castle, and that it was not only his *privilege* but his *duty* to defend it with his life, if need be, and that he was no man, but a cowardly skunk, if he shrank from the duty. So when they threw down the gauntlet to me, I accepted the challenge in defense of my home, although I well knew that they were not honorable foes.

On this particular occasion I prepared immediately for the defense, and had all of my arms well loaded, and the ammunition handily distributed. My most effective weapon in those days was an old musket of the army type, sawed off until the barrel was very short, so that it could be used on due occasion as a war club and with terrible effect, and I am sorry to say that I was often compelled to wield it in this fashion, for this conflict in the District of Lake Michigan was for several years worse than an Indian warfare, and resolved itself into a struggle of the survival of the fittest, and I laid claim to the latter right.

On the following morning, as had been disclosed to me by my Swedish friend, at about three

o'clock, I both heard and discerned a gang of men approaching my habitation, and I promptly challenged their presence by an inquiry as to their purposes on my premises, which at once started a controversy of words, and shortly thereafter advances on their part were met by defensive blows on my part. I made a great deal of noise, and thus aroused the people who lived in the neighborhood to the westward, who afterward told me that they heard much of the colloquy.

Finally, after many blows had been struck, they made a rush for me, and I retreated in good shape, climbing up the steps of my old scow, on which my house was built. It stood about three feet above the ground, hence the necessity for steps. I had my trusty musket handily placed for use at the top of these steps. Perceiving that I was closely pursued, and that one of my pursuers (the chosen one spoken about by my Swedish friend as selected to finish my career with a well directed rifle bullet) was making the balls from a Winchester whizz uncomfortably close to me, I seized the old musket, which I had previously well loaded with an extraordinary amount of small shot, and gave them two charges at close range from different angles as they were trying to get aboard at the bottom of the steps.

I shall never forget the ludicrous situation which resulted from these well directed shots. It seemed that everybody had been hit, for never in my life have I seen so many pairs of shoes sticking up in the air at one time as on that occasion. It seemed to tumble every one of them to the earth. Such howling and squalling I have never heard since the Indian demonstrations of my boyhood. Then there was a wild scramble to escape further damage, and I witnessed their ignominious flight without having my skin punctured by any of their bullets. I was told that a number of them had their faces filled with shot. A few had shot in their tongues. The doctors on the North Side were kept busy for several hours picking these small shot from different portions of their anatomy.

Later a squad of police came to arrest me on a serious charge, but I held them off, and told them that when they sent a single officer down in a decent fashion that I would surrender; but that I would not go with a gang. I further declared that I did not trust them a bit further than I did the gang I had that day vanquished, but that I was afraid of no living man when he came singly. They acceded the point, and went about their business. Afterward Officer Kehoe



came down and advised me that I was wanted at the Chicago Avenue Police Station, and as I had already made arrangements for giving bond, I went with him, signed my bond and returned to the homestead within a very few minutes.

Next day the case against me was tried out in police court, and I defended myself, examining the state's witnesses on cross examination. I was able to speedily disclose the fact that these men had been hired by certain millionaires to come down to my premises for the purpose of ejecting me forcibly and unlawfully. I then testified about the information which I had received from a friend, and the manner in which I had met them, without disclosing the identity of my informant, and the judge thereupon discharged me, saying that I was guilty of no offense under the law; and that even if I were not lawfully in possession of the lands (a matter upon which he did not pretend to pass) that I could not be ejected without due process of law. He also declared that the courts were open to adjudicate such matters as that; that force was unlawful; that even though I were ejected by such means it would not determine the matter; and that I could recover possession of the premises upon an appeal to the courts.

On another occasion they hired a gang of constables, deputy sheriffs, private detectives, and thugs to forcibly eject me. These officers were not there in their official capacity, but unofficially as hired tools of these millionaires, and I was fully aware of this fact. This gang busied themselves in trying to gain possession of my home and to remove my household and other effects therefrom. We had numerous clashes every day for almost a week, and there were many personal encounters resulting in considerable bloodshed. They were numerous, and I could not watch everywhere at one and the same time.

I had at that time two habitations. One was on the old scow, in the upper story of which my wife and I lived, while on the first floor I had a sort of shop, with work bench and drill presses, and other pieces of simple machinery such as I needed in the boat business. My wife could usually hold the fort in the upper story while I skirmished around on the outside and tried to protect the place from invasion. I also had the other boat with cabin on it, and I tried to prevent them from destroying it. It was all that I could look after and I had my hands full.

One day they almost succeeded in ejecting us,

being able three times to throw our furniture and piano from the house, but each time I managed with a little assistance to drive them off by the use of my guns and replace the furniture in the home. They would swear out warrants, and while I was away, take advantage of my absence to throw the household effects out of the house. I was also obliged occasionally to make trips down town to buy provisions and ammunition, for these would run out. During these absences, which the detectives were always looking out for, advantage would be taken to attempt ejection. My wife, however, was a brave woman, and able to handle a gun when necessary to keep them from the top story of the house, and they learned to respect her commands after receiving a few bird shot in places where they would have preferred more ease.

During this week I had also turned the tables on them somewhat by swearing out John Doe warrants for a number of them whose names were unknown; in fact, all were unknown personages to me. I had also taken the constable who had the service of these writs on his hands into my house, as well as a few trusted friends of fighting caliber; so on the very next appearance of the gang on the premises we sallied forth and ar-

rested them after a stubborn fight, and I had the satisfaction of taking them to the Chicago Avenue Police Station and locking them up; but it required a good beating to subdue them, and make them take this sort of medicine. I was in the mood for that sort of work just then, and many a constable, detective, and sheriff felt the butt of that old musket about his head and shoulders, and many of them passed into the dreamland stage by the same route. They were a rough gang of crooks and nothing less than just such work would reduce them to subjection.

During this week about eighty police camped on the borders of the premises, anticipating the possible death of some of the combatants, and these gangs of hired crooks often called on the police to assist them; but the police at this stage of the situation refused to interfere, and rather seemed to enjoy watching the beatings which we administered from day to day. At times there were hundreds of citizens attracted to the locality by the scimmages, which were almost of hourly occurrence, and by adroit language and action I managed to draw the sympathy of the crowd, who were adverse to the tactics employed by these hired tools of those who were too cowardly to come to the front in person and fight their own battles.

I think it was the attitude of these crowds which largely tempered the feeling of the police, who like to be popular whenever it is possible. Finally the police began to jolly and jeer at the gangs of hired tools, when they saw that I was getting the best of my opponents, and that they were not going to be able to eject me. I did not have many friends who had the nerve to give a helping hand, but there were a few hardy spirits who put in some good licks for me whenever they were called upon. With their aid I was always able to get my household goods back into the house whenever they were thrown out by the gangs. We did not have our meals on time that week, but we didn't miss a single one, of that you may be sure.

One evening near the close of the week I had gone down town to sign some appearance bonds, and before going I had an idea that possibly some of the detectives and officers would try to get into the house before my return, since they were always on guard and watching for my possible absence to get a chance to do some dastardly act. It occurred to me that if they succeeded in getting possession of the lower story I would not be able to get to my guns, and that I could not drive them away with my revolvers. So I

loosened a board on the outside of the house, a piece of weatherboard, and slipped both the musket and the double-barreled shotgun inside and then replaced the board, and went on my way. It was then almost dark, and my action was unobserved.

After I had transacted the business down town and was returning home, I met a small boy who was a friend of mine, and he told me that five deputy sheriffs had taken possession of the first story of my house on the scow, but that my wife was holding the fort above. We at once cautiously approached the house, and I removed the guns from their hiding place, and then carefully took a peep into the first story of the house. These officers had brought an oil stove into the place to keep them from freezing, and a lamp to afford a light, and were all huddled closely about the stove, laughing and joking about the easy manner in which they had outgeneraled me and obtained possession at last of the coveted place. They had forgotten the old saying that "he laughs best who laughs last."

It was no laughing matter with me, and they were soon painfully aware of that fact. I carefully considered the situation, and then made up my mind that the logical thing to do first was to

rob them of that light, when I would have them at my mercy, for not one of them would dare to come out of the door. I knew that they could shoot, too, but I figured that I could only lose an arm at most, so I carefully drew aim at the light and pulled the trigger, protecting myself as best I could. Fortunately their shots went wild, while I poured a devastating and deafening round of shot into their midst, and at the same time yelled like a Comanche Indian. I taunted and goaded them with the suggestion that I now had them just where I had so long wanted them, and that I proposed to make short work of them, when in fact I did not mean to kill them, but I did mean to give them the scare of their lives, and to beat them up and puncture them with shot before I allowed them to escape me entirely.

They had been particularly insulting in their remarks during the scrimmages of the week, and this rankled considerably in my bosom, as well as the known fact that if they had once found a favorable opportunity to murder me they would have done so with the greatest gusto and abandon. They begged like good fellows for liberty and safety, promising to depart never more to disturb me or my possession of these premises. They stated that they had been hired to come



there to eject and kill me, but that they personally had no quarrel with me, and if liberated they would never lift a finger against me again, and in fact promised to befriend me if given the chance.

I was to all intents and purposes inexorable. I told them that I did not have the opportunity to entertain them very often, and that I was loth to abandon the hospitalities of the occasion; in fact, that I thought I would be derelict in my duty as a host if I did. As an interlude I would occasionally cut loose with a round of revolver shots from the brace of forty-four caliber weapons which I carried and used at that time. They had long since exhausted their ammunition and were virtually at my mercy, a fact which I did not forget nor really abuse.

I finally kicked in the door and told them that they could clear out as fast as they felt inclined to do, but they now seemed loth to run the gauntlet past me, evidently fearful of some impending danger. And in that they were not a bit mistaken, for I had prepared a suitable reception for them. After a great deal of consultation, they evidently decided that the safest mode of exit was a running jump out of the door. I managed to land on them much after the fashion

of hitting a swift ball with a bat, using in lieu of the latter the old sawed-off musket.

I managed to connect with three of them in rapid succession, and the point of contact was in the neighborhood of the neck, consequently they all dropped on the sand without a murmur or a sound. The remaining two thought that all had gotten safely away. These two made the run at the same time by some mutual blunder, and butted into each other at the doorway, and I landed on both of them about the shoulders instead of the neck. It may have been possible that they were taller than the others, but be that as it may, they jumped out on to the sand yelling like demons and I was in close pursuit, shooting over them as I ran. They were headed toward the lake, and seemed afraid to turn from a straight course, so I ran them into the water, where they were compelled to swim around for fully half a mile in the cold anchor ice, and finally came ashore and sought refuge in the Chicago Avenue water-works pumping station, where I was told they thawed out and related their terrible experience amid the joshing of the members of the fire company nearby, who had witnessed their entrance to the plant. They admitted that they had made a mistake in taking possession of my

house, and stated that they were through with employment in that line for all time to come.

While they were in the water I could have killed them easily, but I only desired to frighten them so badly that they would never venture back to my premises again, and I fully accomplished my purpose.

On returning to the house I found that the three men whom I had batted on the fly were still unconscious and showed no signs of immediate recovery. The boy who had given me timely warning expressed the opinion that they were all dead, a statement in which I did not concur. However, I told him to go and hunt up a cabman and have them taken to a hospital, and he was not slow in complying with my request. I paid the cabman three dollars and he hauled them away to the nearest hospital, where they were soon resuscitated, and they never troubled me afterward.

Upon investigation I discovered the reason why they had not all been killed by my bombardment. There was a workbench in this room, and this bench had a solid oak top four inches thick on it. This bench they had thrown over on one side and got back of the oak top, and by lying flat on the floor had escaped my bullets,

which had riddled the walls on all sides. They must have got some of the small shot, however, from the shotgun at the first volley, and it was this shot no doubt which made them drop to the floor for safety. My wife Maria was faithfully on guard above, and they were afraid to attempt a passage of the stairway up to her quarters, for she could have swept them all with one well directed load of shot. They seemed to be fully aware of this fact and gave her a wide berth. Evidently they were aiming to hold the fort below and starve her out by siege methods, not counting on my being able to dislodge them. They had never thought about what they would do, nor the predicament they would be in, if the light went out! Such people never think very far nor to much purpose. They were merely hired tools, and were simply trying to earn their money.

## CHAPTER XII

### THE DISTRICT OF LAKE MICHIGAN

It has always been my contention that my tract of land, my homestead, did not lie within the borders of the State of Illinois, Cook County, nor the corporate City of Chicago. This view was based fundamentally upon the indisputable fact that this tract of land was not within the borders of the old Virginia grant whose boundaries passed through the Straits of Mackinaw, thence down the eastern shores of Lake Michigan to a point now best designated by Michigan City, Indiana, thence in a south-westerly direction to the Kankakee River; thence down that river to the Illinois River; thence down that river to Cairo, Illinois, where there was a junction of this river and the Ohio; thence along the north bank of the latter river in an easterly direction to the Alleghany Mountains. In view of this fact I contended that none of these governments had any right to exercise any functions of government within the borders of my home-

stead, which I named the "District of Lake Michigan." I had proceeded to organize a territorial government under the Constitution of the United States of America, and held an election of officers to fill all of the necessary offices, and had them sworn in before a United States judge of the nearest district, who was at that time sitting in the City of Chicago. Under this government I was district clerk of the territory.

My object at that time was to prevent these other governments and their officers from usurping and exercising any authority in this territory, which I have always claimed they had no legal right to do.

It may be of further interest to state at this point that when the National government purchased from the Indians and the French government the remainder of the lands which made up the total of the Northwest Territory, they did not acquire the frontage on Lake Michigan, but bought merely to the meander line of that lake. The State of Illinois was carved out of this purchased tract of land and the lands described in the Virginia Grant, hence it did not acquire the bed of the lake as is popularly supposed, and as many astute judges have nevertheless decided in the face of the indisputable facts. This only

illustrates how prone judges are to disregard facts and truths where powerful interests are arrayed on the one side and weaker personages on the other. I do not mean to infer that this is always true—quite the contrary—but it has been too often the case; so much so that the people of the country have begun to demand the direct election of all judges, state and national, and further, that every one of them shall be subject to the popular recall at any time.

In this connection we may pause to remark that if the people wish this to transpire, who shall say nay? Are the people not sovereign in this country? If they are not in fact at this time, what is to hinder them from becoming so? I say that it is high time that we sweep every stumbling block from our path, though we overthrow the Constitution to do it. We would be violating no principle and no precepts of the old Declaration of Independence in so doing, for it declares our inherent right to do that very thing whenever we decide that such a course is, in our judgment, the wise thing to do. Let there be no slavery to this old instrument if it prove the last bulwark and breastwork of the dollar hogs of America.

It would seem from some of the latest expres-



sions of that supposedly august body known as the Supreme Court of the United States, that such has come to pass; and I am voicing the opinion of the ablest member of that body, now passed away, the late Justice Harlan, who did not hesitate to rebuke his brethren for their recreancy to Americanism, to the true spirit of our institutions, and the best interests of the whole people. He did not hesitate to point out clearly that they had reversed the former decisions of that body on the precise point at issue, in order that they might compromise the situation most favorably to the dollar hogs, and thereby render a judgment which would in its last analysis and effects be as harmless to their vitality and lawless power as though written upon water instead of parchment.

By its effects, or rather lack of effect, it has already been judged. It has proved a blessing in disguise for the dollar hogs and their pet institution known as the modern trust. They are praying and hungering for more of the same doctrine. Such decisions will never deliver the American people from the slavery of the dollar hogs nor put a mouthful of bread into hungering mouths. It is high time for the Supreme Court to reverse itself again. Let us hope it will land

on the right side next time. Its members need to look at these matters from the shoes of the whole people instead of the dollar hog contingency and their sleek lawyers. They need to take one good squint through the spectacles of the whole people, and while they are doing so try to locate that lost piece of mechanism within their bodies known as the human heart. Perhaps their vision would be keener and truer if they tried out this process. I know they would not be compelled to violate any portion of their oath of office, nor any instrument known to the legal profession, nor any statute known to the law, by so doing. On the contrary, as Justice Harlan has painfully pointed out to the American people (and it was to them that his dissenting opinion was directed, for he knew full well that so far as his associates were concerned, it would fall upon unhearing ears), they would more nearly line up with every landmark of the law and the clear decisions of their honored predecessors.

Since this decision the Sherman Anti-Trust Law has become popular among the corporations and trusts, where before it was odious, and all of the apologists and advocates of the dollar hogs of America are now bubbling over with praise for this supposedly and hitherto praiseworthy

statute, in which they never before perceived any good. All of the great commercial associations and their officers are lauding its virtues to the skies, and really have the temerity to embarrass the Supreme Court by openly stating that their change of attitude has been due to this change of its construction and application by that court.

Thus for the first time in the history of the world we behold the anomaly of outlaws and their parasites falling in love with the Law. The leading counsel of these outlaws are open in their defense of the measure as it now stands, and have even had themselves interviewed by representatives of the press, to whom they unfold their bitter opposition to the idea that Congress should change the law in any manner. One of them, counsel for both Rockefeller and the Beef Trust barons, and the author of the infamous "immunity bath" plea, even has the effrontery to say that this body is not competent to attempt a change in any of its provisions, and to use his exact language, "this is no law for bunglers to fool with"!

We presume he thinks himself capable of fooling with it *ad libitum*. He has often fooled the law itself, and the dear people as well; in fact, his entire time and attention for the past seven

years have largely, if not wholly, been devoted to this very profitable endeavor. We should be pleased if he would be frank enough to give the dear people and Congress an itemized bill of his receipts from such corporations since the advent of his "immunity bath" plea. What would the law amount to if he had the opportunity to suggest all the changes he would love to see made in it? We should be more than pleased if he would give the people and Congress a full outline of the exact changes he would love to have made in this one law. If there is one single change in his program which would operate favorably in behalf of the people and to the detriment of the trusts which he represents, then we will change our opinion of him as a trust "barker." It is now our candid opinion that if he were permitted to inject any substitute paragraphs and to blue pencil old ones, that the law would be even less potent than when it was applied to his dear clients, the "Beef Trust barons."

The truth about the matter is that he is only aroused to this outbreak because of the known fact that Congress intends to make such changes in the law as are necessary to restore its former vitality, of which this decision of the Supreme Court robbed it, and to make its application and

scope more drastic against all combinations in restraint of trade, whether reasonable or unreasonable—in other words, that it may be clear that all combinations in restraint of trade are absolutely and unequivocally prohibited. This would naturally rouse the ire of a corporation and trust lawyer, who is wont to look at every law through the spectacles of his clients, rather than through those of the people. The *opinions* of such a lawyer as they may, or may not, affect the citizenship of the land are of very little value.

But this is not the first time that the Supreme Court has been guilty of such conduct in matters vital to the interests of the great body of the people. Many years ago we had an income tax law, which was repeatedly held to be constitutional by the Supreme Court. Then we didn't have one. Finally Congress, as the servant of the whole people, passed an income tax law. This law had a clear majority of the court on its first hearing, but for some unknown and unexplained reason, during the interim one of these judges reversed himself and the law was declared unconstitutional, and the people's will was defeated, and the will of the people reversed by the very creatures they had themselves created.

And do not lose sight of the fact that they

thereby reversed the repeated decisions and opinions of the great and able judges who had in years gone by passed upon exactly the same proposition that was then before them. Does it not strike you that such conduct required a world of assumption and courage of a doubtful kind? In the language of the street, would you not place it in the category of unprecedented "nerve" and "gall"? But they were equal to the necessary emergency and managed to force it down the throats of the American people. Now we have a new income tax law, which is constitutional until it is declared unconstitutional, and the sleek lawyers of the big trusty corporations are burning the midnight oil to prepare the necessary briefs to have it so declared; and it will surprise me greatly if they are not successful. Where there is a will there is a way.

That almighty word "unconstitutional" has become more almighty than the people themselves as it has been wielded recently by the Supreme Court. It is the dollar-hog panacea for all obnoxious laws that have escaped their trusties in Congress and the White House. When the people have made it so hot for their representatives that they have been obliged to pass unwillingly much needed legislation along the lines that



would help them most, and the President has been afraid to veto the measures, then the word goes out that it is unconstitutional, and can't be enforced, and that the Supreme Court will so declare it. Quite recently we have had some Attorneys General who have had the brazen impudence to refuse even to try to enforce such laws, or to defend them before the courts, thus virtually taking unto themselves the veto power, the nullifying power.

Such officers ought to be impeached, and when we obtain the recall power of all public servants they will be recalled very promptly for such work, or rather lack of work. Too often the Supreme Court has taken up the specious pleas of these sleek corporation lawyers and saved the dear corporations by declaring the obnoxious law to be unconstitutional. Too often have they been kind to the dear corporations and *unkind* to the people who pay their salaries, but who have never yet elected one of them.

In this day and age a man ought to be ashamed to serve in any office which is not an elective one, and that by a direct vote of the whole people. No honorable man will deny the fact that the United States Senate is being greatly purged by the law which compels the election of every mem-



ber by the direct vote of his constituency. The old plea of justification, that we heard for more than a century, upholding the opposite doctrine, the undemocratic doctrine, has gone down to defeat forever, and so will the false philosophy which now justifies the appointment of Federal officers by the President, and state officers by the Governor of a commonwealth; and so on down the line of appointive officials everywhere. It has no place in a democratic republic, and the day is not far distant when it will be utterly wiped out.

Justice Harlan pointed out, without mincing his words, that his colleagues on the bench, in order to reach the opinion which they handed down in the case under consideration, were obliged to usurp legislative functions which they do not lawfully and rightfully possess. In order to bring about the declaration of law which so mightily aids the dollar hogs of the country, they had to legislate a word into the written law which was not there, which had never been put there by the Congress of the people of this country, a word which that body squarely refused to put in the law.

The whole doctrine which they advocated was dependent upon this unlawful action on their

part, according to Justice Harlan. In doing this they were obliged to reverse the decisions of their honored predecessors, not in one case but in several cases involving the precise point at issue. It would seem that under such circumstances they were unpardonably perverse, yea, that they were willfully determined to do the thing they did, regardless of *precedents* or the *written law*. Unbiased courts are not wont to do these things, and more especially so where the result is sure to work great harm to the great body of the people, as this decision was bound to do, according to the keen review of it by Justice Harlan, from every standpoint.

This proneness of the highest court in the land to interpret the written laws most favorably to the predatory corporations of the land, to the great detriment of the people, this apparent determination of this supposedly sublime body to refuse to interpret the laws as they are written by the representatives of the people, is, in my humble opinion, soon to be ended. The people have a right to have their laws interpreted as they were written, not as they should have been written by permission of these overlords of Law, not as the King would have them written, but as they are written by the people. That old

kingly idea was shot to pieces more than a century ago. We need no overlords in this country, and by the eternal justice of that decision we are not going to tolerate any at this late day. The people have a right to be sovereign in this country, and no personage, however high he may imagine himself to be elevated, has a right to thwart their will by substituting his own opinion for their opinion. These officers of the people are entitled to no consideration or respect whatever unless they line up with the absolute administration of the will of the people.

The government is no holy body. It is nothing but a piece of machinery, which the people themselves out of physical necessity have created to do their bidding, because they cannot carry out their public desires and the business of the nation in any other methodical or business-like way. These officers of the law and land everywhere, from the highest to the lowest, are the servants of the people, nothing more, and we are paying them for their work. If they don't like the job they can quit at any time; and we ought to have the right, or rather we *do* have the right, but ought to have a law by which we could separate them from the job at any time that we do not like the quality of their work in our behalf.

I am sorry to say, however, that during the past twenty-five years there has apparently grown up a disposition upon the part of the people to treat their officers and servants as though they were overlords and rulers. This is a false attitude, which I am glad to say is just at the present writing undergoing a change. Its existence perhaps grew up out of the political boss system, where nothing could be obtained in the way of rights, or wrongs either, except by the intercession of the "boss" of the ward, legislature, congress, etc.

I am also compelled to say that I even dislike to see the chief executive of a state or nation intermeddle too much with the affairs of the other branches of government. It savors too much of the "boss" system with which we have been cursed so long, and which is responsible for the ease with which the dollar hogs of the land have controlled our institutions of every class, public, private, and eleemosynary, and enslaved the white race without their consent.

I do not like to see the President of the country, or rather of the people, our highest paid servant, laying down the law to senators and representatives, who know their duties just as well as he does, and are just as likely to do them. The people will speak to them in no uncertain way

if they fail to perform their duties as they wish them to do. The people will shortly, in my humble judgment, put the initiative and referendum, as well as the popular recall, into working shape in every branch of the public service. It has proved salutary wherever it has been tried, and there is no good reason why it should not be put to work universally. It has always been a part of the methods of the business world; yet strange to say these Big Business fellows are the very ones who inveigh against its adoption by the people in the public service.

This ought to prove a strong argument in its favor. They never champion any real reform, and we do not expect them to do so. An empire would suit their tastes much better than a democratic republic, for they could then buy franchises and valuable privileges to exploit the people. Of course in recent years they have not fared so badly in this country, for the plain reason that the political boss system has enabled them to control almost every blessed thing which they desired to exploit, as we have very pointedly called attention to elsewhere in this story. Things, in fact, have run so smoothly for them that they do not relish a change, and especially one which would forever limit their activities to the very minimum



A Recent Photograph of Captain Streeter





of possibilities. They are accustomed to the maximum of possibilities. We could not expect them to join the anti-slavery movement, nor to wave an abolition banner on the march.

Again, how often have the courts of our land declared stock gambling transactions, and the very institution itself, the Stock Exchange, to be lawful, when every honest citizen in the land knows full well that they are dishonest, unlawful gambling hells; that in these very places daily the biggest gamblers on earth operate with impunity, and under the protecting decisions of the highest court in the land. That here daily the fruits of our fields, of our husbandmen, are made the pawns of these gaming kings of high finance. Here the youth of the land are taught that to be a "Board of Trade man" is considered an honor among the select circles.

Just ponder over this: To be a Board of Trade gambler is considered a tribute to one's ability to separate some less shrewd operator from his pile of money, and that is supposed to be an honorable operation and business. But where do they get this money to gamble with, every one of them? We all know where the big trust manipulators who are the biggest in the game, got theirs; but where do the smaller fry get theirs? They get

it from still smaller fry all over the land, and they get it from foolish people who imagine that they can beat the game. Think of the country bankers who play the game with the money of their depositors. Scarcely a day goes by that we do not read of their undoing. Clerks and trusted men all over the land are tempted and go the same route to destruction. But it is not always the small bankers and business men who play the game and are uncovered.

Every big city in the country has had its example in very recent years, and in Milwaukee the honored ex-president of the American Bankers Association used millions of the money belonging to depositors in playing the wheat market in Chicago, which he was unable to replace, and he had to pay the penalty. In Peoria the former president of the American Teachers Association, a school superintendent and banker as well, went the same route.

In New York the great money panic of 1907 was precipitated by the action of certain financiers who caught certain bankers and board of trade operators in close quarters and crushed them unscrupulously, because they knew by the magnitude of their gaming transactions in copper stock on the board of trade that they must of neces-

sity have used the moneys of the depositors of their string of banks. In order to make a killing, and in order to forever eliminate them from the banking world, they caused an investigation and a run to be made on this string of banks, which brought about the desired results.

But it did more than they anticipated that it would. It caused almost every bank in the country to suspend payments to its depositors, and the best business concerns in the country to do business on paper solely. In pulling down these stock-gambling competitors they almost paralleled the feat of Samson, who pulled down the tabernacle on his own head to destroy his enemies. But in the end they reaped a handsome harvest, for with the revival of business operations they were the only ones able to buy up the tons of stock securities which had gone to the very bottom of stock quotation values, and later resell them to a gullible public. In Chicago and Pittsburg we have had repetitions of this conspiracy to pull down a competitor both in the banking and stock gambling world; so well known are the examples that I do not need to mention names to be understood. But still it goes on. In Memphis we have a recent example of the same sort. One of the biggest bankers, a most trusted man, uses more

than two million dollars of the money of the depositors in the cotton market gaming down in New York, and is unable to restore the losses.

Who has all of these millions and billions of squandered moneys? The big fish always eat up the little fish, and so it is in the stock-gambling world. These outlaw stock gamblers, these gamblers beyond the law, hold and keep the untold billions stolen by thousands of defaulting officials, both public and private, who have been and are now languishing in the prisons of the nation; moneys which were gambled away in the stock exchanges of the boards of trade all over the land. This is the principal business of the kings of finance in this, the twentieth century of so-called civilization in the heart of Christendom, in justice and freedom-loving America. It begins to look like some of our citizens enjoy entirely too much liberty and freedom, as well as a monopoly of the interpretation and administration of that chameleon-like article called justice.

When a man loses his money at the gaming table of some small fry gamekeeper who is operating without the sanction of the written law, the money may be promptly recovered by an action at law in most states, and in some the wife or

conservator may sue if the head of the house declines or is afraid to take such action. Why should a different rule prevail in dealing with the big fish? Will some Solon of the army of lawyers for the outlaw dollar hogs answer this query in a straightforward manner? Or perhaps some sage on the Supreme Bench of the land will be good enough to give us a straight answer to a plain question in behalf of the dollar hogs. I can imagine the owlish look of wisdom which steals over his wizened countenance as he repeats that old falsity of the supposed maxims of equity, that he who comes into a court of equity must come with clean hands. What a convenient piece of rubbish to aid dollar hog gamblers and crooks, and how it likewise relieves the lazy judges of an enormous amount of labor and real work, to which most of them are strangers.

Our courts have repeatedly and almost universally declared that race-track wagering and transactions are gambling, but they refuse to apply the same rule to board-of-trade gambling. Why? Because it would catch too many of the big fellows, and they won't stand for it. The politicians, who make the judges with the money of these big fellows, show them that there is a higher law which they dare not trespass upon if they

value their reputations, their political futures, and especially if they desire to succeed themselves. This is the unwritten law, of course, but it is none the less potent. It is almighty. It makes all of them scratch their heads and think twice before they pass upon the proposition.

In the recent prosecution of the bucket shop king of Chicago, the Department of Justice at Washington, and the President of the United States, were persuaded into the belief that they might not have sufficient evidence to convict the king of bucketshoppers, although he was caught with the goods on him, as the men of the street are wont to express it, so they allowed him to plead guilty and pay a fine of ten thousand dollars, which this poor innocent was perfectly willing to do, not because he was guilty, but simply to get rid of this insignificant sum of money, and to show his loyalty to the old Flag, and to prove to his friends in the Department of Justice and to the President that he was a "good fellow" and had no desire to overwork them.

The time is coming when this sort of discrimination will end, when gambling will be gambling, whether it be big or little fry who indulge in it; and the boards of trade, so-called, will pass into oblivion along with the memories and cus-

toms of the Forum at Rome, where the same spirit prevailed, that spirit which said it was right that only the fittest should survive, and that justice could only belong to the strong.

And the time is not far distant when every public servant in the land will be elected by the people, from the highest to the lowest, and will be held personally responsible for his opinions and acts in the discharge of his public duties. God speed the day, if justice is ever to reign in our midst!

We established our government in the District of Lake Michigan without any flourish of authority or blare of trumpets, and, in fact, without any undue demonstration. One of my outhouses was converted into a temple of justice, and a sign placed above its door proclaimed its august character. Our deliberations, elections, and other necessary assemblages were held in this building until the police authorities of Chicago regarded it with secret disfavor, and one night, in company with numerous hired thugs, during my temporary absence, tore down the structure with great gusto and unusual demonstration, as I was informed by spectators, and stole the lumber of which it was built. I never knew to what purpose they devoted the loot, and did not care very much,



for it was not very valuable. Then they filed a charge against me which they designated as unlawful assembly, and had me arrested. I waived arraignment and let them bind me over to the grand jury, which indicted me, as was naturally to be expected from a body which hears only one side of a controversy, and which usually harkens to the advice of the state's attorney, who in this case was as usual under the domination of the millionaires. Upon the trial of the case I was found not guilty and discharged.

Shortly after this one of my warmest friends and defenders, William H. Niles, conceived the idea that he could declare himself military governor of the territory without the necessary appointment by the chief executive of the nation. In this move I had no part, and it was done without my knowledge or consent. I admired his nerve and fighting spirit, but I did not approve his judgment, for I knew full well that he was making a mistake from a legal standpoint. His declaration of authority over the territory, which was purely civil and had no relation whatever to the title to the land itself, was undertaken under the cover of darkness, which does not bode good to any cause.

But be that as it may, one fine morning the resi-

dents of the district awoke to find Governor Niles on hand with about forty or fifty gentlemen as his military escort; and for some unknown reason they had taken the precaution to dig intrenchments and throw up breastworks on the borders of the district, and these were even surmounted with barbed wire. His men were all armed with old muskets, which were loaded with powder and ball, for what purpose nobody seemed to know, since there was no immediate occasion for warlike preparations. I was soon advised of these happenings and with others at once took occasion to survey the situation.

Governor Niles was not long left in peace or in possession of the territory, for his presence seemed to have about the same effect upon the Chicago police that is usually produced by a red banner waved in the face of a bull. From their conduct on this occasion one would naturally have surmised that the gravest danger threatened the inhabitants of the entire city, and perchance that Tecumseh and his vanquished hosts of dead warriors had suddenly been resurrected and were about to storm the city. Hundreds of blue-coated "bobbies" swarmed about the borders of the territory, fussing about just as so many bumblebees might do in the neighborhood of their

disturbed habitat. And, like those testy little insects, they did not apparently know just whom or what to sting.

One of their noble officers, Captain Barney Baer, finally appeared on the scene and rode within hailing distance of Governor Niles, who immediately ordered him to halt and get out of the district. This he did not feel inclined to do, and the governor promptly shot down his horse. Captain Baer thereupon ran for cover, feeling that the neighborhood was an unhealthy spot.

At this juncture the police approached me and wanted to know the meaning of the situation. I told them that it was as unexpected to me as it was to them, and that I had no part in it, which they were disinclined to believe. Consequently our colloquy resulted in a quarrel which had no reasonable basis in fact. They threatened my arrest if I did not call Niles out of the district; but I declined to do this because he was a friend and I secretly admired his grit.

The police made so much fuss, and threatened the governor and his men with such dire consequences, that the courage of the latter began to ooze away, and one by one they silently and stealthily dropped out of the ranks until the

governor was almost deserted. At this point the police plucked up courage enough to arrest him, and under the circumstances, he offered no further resistance.

After his arrest the police, who should have protected their prisoner, permitted hired thugs to rush in to him and strike him viciously; but the governor was a husky individual himself and gave them almost as good as they gave him. It was, however, a disgraceful spectacle, which the police would have had no difficulty in preventing. Niles was not convicted of the serious charge upon which he was arrested, so the whole affair turned out to be a roaring farce, in which the police received the bulk of the laughter. It was the old story of much ado about nothing.

At one time about fifty Siberians who were on their way to the neighborhood of Houghton Lake, where they had purchased considerable land, asked permission to camp on my premises for a few days in order to rest their tired horses and to recuperate a little themselves. I had no objection whatever, and, in fact, was pleased to accommodate them, so they settled down peacefully on my homestead without any sort of demonstration whatever. Not long after a swarm of policemen came buzzing curiously about the

camp, thinking, as I afterward learned, that these poor people were Indians. Knowing that the Pottawatomies were friends of mine, by a great flight of imagination, they came to the conclusion that the Pottawatomies were on deck to aid me in some unknown scheme. Consequently, the police were immediately aroused to opposition, and the Siberians were ordered to move on in double quick.

I happened to hear this order given and immediately appeared on the scene and informed the police that these people were here with my permission, and that I proposed to see that they were not molested. I told them that they might just as well move out of the district if they wished to avoid serious trouble. They knew from the manner in which I spoke that I meant business, and they speedily decided to get legal advice before starting any trouble. They did not return, so I presume they were informed that they were entirely too hasty and would better not proceed further in that direction.

During these years the police, who had entered into a coalition with the millionaires, acted much as though the title to these lands was in the police department, and that it was a part of their jurisdiction to try and determine questions

of title to realty, a function which has always been delegated to the civil courts of our land, a fact which I had learned long years before I had ever seen the city of Chicago. I had read Blackstone's Commentaries and numerous other legal works before reaching my majority, and my father gave me much practical advice from time to time during the progress of many lawsuits in which he was counsel. I could best most of the pettifoggers who were practicing around the justice shops and police courts any day, and I made some of the best lawyers in Chicago respect my opinions and my rights as well from time to time. I nearly always defended myself in the brushes with the police, deputy sheriffs, detectives and thugs, and seldom got the worst of it when I had a fair trial. I always appealed if I was not accorded my rights, and came out in good shape in the upper courts.

The year after the World's Fair at Jackson Park, a gang of these hired officers, during my absence, burned our house on the old scow, after having first set our furniture and piano out on the ground. Notwithstanding the fact that all this occurred within the eyesight of the police, none of the persons guilty of both arson and housebreaking were apprehended, nor was

any effort ever made to apprehend them. This is only one of many incidents which proved the connivance of the police department with the millionaires in their efforts to eject me, and thus aid in robbing me of title to this land, a matter in which they had no legitimate concern, and which was entirely foreign to their business. The civil courts alone could lawfully determine that question, and it was a dastardly interference on their part, which did not stop at criminal acts under cover of darkness, to aid these lawless tools of those who did not possess the courage to come out into the open and attack me, or into a court of civil jurisdiction and challenge my rights upon the premises which I created, occupied, and owned. Their other acts of like character were legion, and I could not attempt to enumerate them. I can merely take time to relate a few which indicate the situation clearly and unmistakably.

I ordered a big moving van to the scene as soon as I found my home destroyed and my things lying unprotected on the ground, and also put up a tent. Then I immediately constructed two small houses and had them hauled to the premises. During the following night the police hauled them away and planted them, van and houses, upon a piece of ground belonging to the city



near the Randolph Street bridge. They also drove off a wagon and contents belonging to a friend of mine from Michigan, by the name of "Billy" McManners, who had settled upon the district by my permission.

We went down to the place where our things had been thus unlawfully removed by the police, and took possession of them, and I can assure you that any person who came about and attempted to interfere with us received as complete a beating as we were able to administer, police and hired thugs alike. We made no discrimination in favor of or against any of them, and accepted all comers. We had many bloody battles before we headed our wagons back to the district, which we did as soon as we were fully prepared to do so.

When we approached the district at Superior Street the police appeared in force and attempted to head us off, but the bullets from our Winchesters whizzed so uncomfortably close to their ears that they retired from the scene of action, appearing content to hover on the outskirts of the district for several days, during which time we wiped the earth with scores of them. At that stage in our affairs we were really desperate and would brook no interference with our rights

from any source, and we impressed that fact almost hourly upon them. The crowds of people standing about almost constantly gave us their warmest sympathy and from time to time cheered us on to fresh courage. It was something of an inspiration to know that the justice of our position was being recognized by the truly disinterested.

In a malignant effort to annoy and harass us the police went before one of the judges in Cook County and made representations that the two-year-old-child of McManner's was being improperly cared for, although its mother did little else than care for it, and sought to have the child removed from their custody. Upon these false representations the court sent physicians down to examine the child and to remove it if they felt inclined to do so after an examination. We were so enraged at this palpable and despicable scheme to injure our rights that we gave the doctors a good drubbing and ran them out of the district, as well as the policemen who came with them. Then came warrants, which we ignored also, not having any time just at that juncture to waste in fruitless pettifogging while our possessions were not yet fixed in our new houses, and while our interests were being men-

aced by the police and the hired thugs who hung on the borders of the district like so many hyenas, only waiting a convenient opportunity during our absence to swoop down and destroy our habitation and home.

We finally got our possessions fixed once more in our houses, and continued to defend our homes from day to day against all persons who presumed too far on our acquaintance, and such gentry were numerous. However, our reception parties were too warm for their comfort and they never tarried very long at a time. They often skulked about during the night, seeking for an opportunity to set fire to our houses or to ascertain some fact that might be advantageous to their nefarious designs, and we were often apprised by friends of their presence and exact location.

Whenever we were able to learn their exact whereabouts, one of us would usually make some sort of demonstration to attract their attention, and while thus interested I would make a detour and get in their rear, and then the old musket came into full play. Using it as a club, a trick which I had well learned in many a battle in the Civil War, with a few swift and well directed blows I toppled them over into dreamland, and

if any were left unscathed they beat a hasty retreat, glad to escape the fate of their fellows.

Two sons of a well-known millionaire were caught in this fashion, both of them husky young athletes who prided themselves on their prowess in that direction. They had cherished the fond hope that they might catch the old man napping and doubtless crack his skull or break his neck, and thus more speedily end the fruitless warfare, which no doubt was expensive to the family exchequer, and the defeats galling to the young bloods. I left them in such a bruised and battered condition that they had to be carried out of the district in ambulances, and to my knowledge they never again visited my premises.

I also served a crooked and pestiferous lawyer in the same fashion when he too persistently attempted to bluff and annoy us. He carried a broken arm in a sling for many a day, and his bruised and battered countenance was a ludicrous picture in police court when I was arraigned for assault some days after the encounter. He never came about the premises afterward, although I knew that he was still directing the movements of others. I gave him to understand that he might not be able to get away if I ever found him upon the premises in the future, and he

was wise enough to know that I meant exactly what I said.

During my absence for a few hours, at one time, Captain Shaack, with other police officers, unlawfully entered my house and took two revolvers away with them to the Chicago Avenue station. When I learned of this I was thoroughly enraged, and I resolved that I would have the matter out very speedily with this plundering captain of police, so I grabbed up my old musket (I already had two revolvers strapped to my belt) and went at once to the police station, where I cornered Captain Shaack in short order.

Covering him with my musket, in the presence of other officers, I demanded my revolvers, and at the same time told him with due emphasis that he was an outlaw, and that he knew full well he had violated the Constitution and the Bill of Rights when he invaded my house and stole them; and further, that if he ever interfered in such an unlawful manner with my possessions again, I proposed to shoot him, or he would shoot me. I also told him that no old renegade like him who had been chased out of Philadelphia because of crooked work could ever violate my rights with impunity and escape disgrace; that I had investigated his record in the East and

stood ready to prove it. This was a rare piece of news to his officers, and it had a very visible effect on his countenance. "Captain," he said to me, "you can have your weapons and we will say no more about it." He then ordered the revolvers brought to me, and I carried them back home. I was never troubled by the captain afterward.

On another occasion I had used the butt of that same old musket on his head and shoulders, and knocked him out completely, so he knew that I meant business. I had looked out of my window on the old scow one night and saw Captain Shaack and Officer Kehoe approaching my premises as they passed under a street light, and surmised that they were up to some trick, or they would never have sallied forth at such an hour as midnight; so I slipped out, musket in hand, and hid behind a short stretch of fence about ten feet high. They didn't realize my presence until I sprang at them like a tiger, and delivered a knockout blow on the head and shoulders of Shaack, who dropped like a log. Then I sprang for Kehoe, shouting at him as I did so, "I've got you now!" But the latter ran as fast as he could in the direction from whence he had come, and I then returned to attend the captain, who

had recovered use of himself, and was running as fast as his condition would permit.

I let him go, but shouted dire threats and imprecations at him at the top of my voice, to impress him with the fact that this was dangerous territory to invade under cover of darkness, and that in the future he would better keep his distance. I was also advised by a very reputable family, who claimed to be in possession of the facts, that he was an accomplice of Dan Coughlan in the murder of Doctor Cronin, and I have no doubt that he was crook enough to have been guilty of anything which would bring him a dirty penny. I know he would have willingly connived at my murder if he could have accomplished it; but he was very much afraid of my wits and the experience that I had passed through in the army. I was a little too handy with the use of firearms and clubbed muskets to suit his taste.

I had a highly interesting experience with the successor of Captain Shaack one night just before I had taken my household goods out of the van, at the time my house on the scow was burned, as I have already related. I had a tent up, and the van stood beside the tent, and was only partially unloaded. Among other things it contained two



big iron safes, which made effective breastworks for me to fire from whenever the police and the hired thugs appeared on the premises. These safes were hard to beat for defensive operations.

Captain Max Heidelmeier and some of his men had been prowling around under cover of darkness for the purpose of obtaining, if possible, some strategic advantage over me, and of preventing me from removing my goods and placing them permanently in the two houses which I had moved on to the premises. The captain made the mistake of separating from his men, and attempting to do a little scouting on his own hook. My friends McManners, Hulkey, and Niles captured him before he had proceeded a hundred yards, and marched him under cover of firearms to the van, where I was holding the fort between the two iron safes.

I was alive to the situation, and resolved to make the most of it, by scaring the old captain as nearly to death as I was capable of doing. I ordered the boys to disarm him, and then march him up to the open end of the van, where I would administer the death sentence. They carried out my orders to the letter; and I then commanded him to kneel and pray before I pulled the trigger of the old musket, with which I had

him covered. He fell upon his knees instantly, and implored me in the most abject and beseeching manner that I had ever seen any human being beg for life (and I had witnessed many such scenes in the army life) until I really feared for his reason. He said he would take a solemn oath, if I would not kill him, that he would never molest me in the future, and that he would never send any more of his men on to my premises to harass or annoy me, and that he would faithfully befriend me if opportunity ever offered a chance.

I appeared reluctant to swerve from my apparently fixed determination to end his dishonorable career without further consideration, but finally said to the boys that I had a notion to try him out and see if there was any manhood left in him, and if his oath was worth anything. I also cautiously added that I could get him anyhow at any time that I wanted to; in fact, had already had several chances to have killed him within the fair boundaries of the law, but had desisted. I then ordered his release, and he made his exit from the district in record time, and ever after that he treated me with proper and just consideration, such as an officer ought on all occasions accord to every citizen, no matter what their circumstances or station in life.

In the long years that I have been in possession of the homestead on the lake, and in the lake, I have had a thousand battles with these unlawful invaders, of one character or another, of which the ones I have related are more or less typical, and I think I may truthfully say that since the doctrine of the adverse possession of realty has been a part of the jurisprudence of the land, I have maintained my possession with a greater degree of hostility than any man who ever lived, and with more openness and notoriety; so much so that my very name has for years been associated with the tract in the mind of everyone. It has long been known as "Streeterville" to the people, the press, public records, and documents of the city, county and state.

## CHAPTER XIII

### TRIED FOR MURDER

In this battle for my rights I was loyally seconded and assisted by my wife, Maria Streeter, who has passed away. I think a braver and more loyal hearted woman never lived, and I feel that as a matter of justice to her memory a word should be said of her, before this story is ended. Her maiden name was Mulholland. She was born in Belfast, Ireland, and possessed every noble trait of her race, with none of their faults. Her father was an officer in the British Army, and was killed in the Crimean War. In her early womanhood she had been a school teacher in her native land, but she came to America with her sister, to live with their uncle, the late John Ward of Detroit, the millionaire shipbuilder and owner. It was there that I first met and knew her, although we were not married for several years thereafter. She married a man by the name of Jordan, from Pennsylvania, who was a Union soldier, and with whom she only lived a few short months before he went away to

defend his country, never to return to her again.

Left alone, she operated a commission business in Pittsburgh for a few years with profit, and finally sent for her aged mother to cross the Atlantic and join her, that she might spend her remaining days with her children, both of whom were in America. My wife, soon after her mother's coming to this country, removed with her to Chicago, and it was not long thereafter that we were married. Later this good old lady died on the District of Lake Michigan, where she was making her home with us.

It may be truly said that when my wife married me it was "for better or for worse," and she stuck to me through every experience, through sunshine and shadow. She never expressed herself as sorry for her decision. She had a sunshiny disposition, always looking on the bright side of life, and no matter what the situation, though it were fraught with hardship or danger, she could always see the clouds lined with silver. To have been blessed with such a helpmate was indeed a wonderful inspiration to me, for if ever a man needed such companionship, I certainly did. I should have been miserable with a discontented or a cowardly woman. Her Irish love for home and its defense won many a battle on the

lake front, for she could use a musket loaded with bird shot to good effect, as many a thug who thought to force an entrance to the Streeter homestead could painfully and reluctantly testify.

Those were days to test the stoutest heart, and she proved herself to be pure gold, tried out in a crucible test such as few women of this country have ever been called upon to pass through. She died on the District in 1904, and I was not permitted to be at her bedside as she left these shores for her last voyage, nor to minister to her wants during her last illness, for I was at that time incarcerated for the alleged commission of a crime of which I was not guilty, and I shall now relate the circumstances which led up to and resulted in that situation.

During the winter of 1902 a notorious Missouri outlaw and crook by the name of John Kirk had been imported to Chicago for the express purpose of assisting in removing me from this mundane sphere, for which he was to be paid a stipulated sum, if he succeeded. Of these facts I have ample proof. He was associated with the other thugs and so-called officials who were engaged in the same pursuit, and one night they made a raid into the district to carry out their murderous and felonious purpose.

They commenced operations by shooting at the houses of McManners and Hulkey, both of whom were in possession of these houses with their families by my permission and consent. The rifle shots passed entirely through these houses, and the occupants were obliged to seek shelter outside their homes. They concealed themselves in the tall weeds near their homes, and endeavored to locate the direction of the rifle shots. They finally ascertained that they came from a little shed which had been used for a shelter by a man who kept track of the loads of sand removed from the sand pit a short distance away near Oak street. McManners and Hulkey then opened fire on this shed purely as a matter of defense, and the occupants fled to the cover of the tall weeds which grew all about.

I was much farther away, and in my home when I heard the shooting, and likewise took to the weeds for safety, and for observation, but I did not engage in the shooting, because I was not in danger at that time. While concealed in the weeds I saw a certain lawyer, accompanied by a disreputable detective, pass by and secrete themselves in the weeds not far from me. They did not discover my presence, and I did not disclose it to them.



I simply watched their operations with interest. They took deliberate aim at the party which was firing on McManners and Hulkey and blazed away. Somebody yelled as if shot, and then they sneaked away. The firing ceased entirely at this stage, and upon closer investigation I learned that a man had been shot whose name was John Kirk. The patrol wagon came, and McManners and Hulkey were arrested and hauled away to the police station, where they were put under arrest, and later charged with his murder.

I went over to the police station to investigate, and to be of assistance to them, and while there I also was arrested, charged with being accessory to the alleged murder. I was liberated on bail, but was unable to find bail for my friends. My associates who went on my bond knew that I would never decamp and leave them in the lurch; in fact, they well knew that I could not be driven away from the homestead, but I was not able to satisfy them that McManners and Hulkey would not run away if liberated on bail. This was always a source of great sorrow to me, for these two friends always imagined that I did not put forth enough effort to secure bail for them. They reasoned that if I could get bail so easily for myself, that I ought to have been able to obtain

it for them. But this was not true. We often learn in this life that things are not always as they seem. Nothing would have pleased me more than to have secured the liberty of my friends on bail, for they were both fearless and noble fellows, for whom I shall always entertain the greatest admiration and gratitude in my heart of hearts.

It was several months before our case was called for trial before Judge Cavanagh and a jury of our peers. After days and weeks of effort on the part of the state and its attorneys to convict us by perjured and false testimony, the jury disagreed. Then a wait of almost a year occurred before we were placed on trial for the second time. This time we were arraigned before one of the most incompetent judges who ever graced the bench; he was such an insignificant character, and has since fallen into such oblivion and disgrace that I shall not even mention his name. He knew about as much about presiding over a court of justice as the average justice of the peace in the neighborhood of Bingville or Podunk.

During the interval which had elapsed, the hired and crooked attorneys of the millionaire colony had been busily collecting and preparing an abundance of new perjury and false testimony,

and this fact, coupled with unfair and assinine rulings of the court, which kept from the jury most of our most valuable and pertinent testimony, resulted in our conviction of a crime of which we were not guilty, while the real murderers today walk the streets of Chicago unscathed.

They killed this man for the very purpose of saddling the offense onto us, and then brazenly, and with the boldest effrontery, came forward and testified that they had seen us shoot the very man whom they had killed in cold blood, the man whom they had imported to take my life. And they selected the darkness and its shadows to aid them in accomplishing their purpose.

Unfortunately in our defense we were not blessed with the services of competent counsel, though our attorneys doubtless did the best they could under the circumstances; but I am now persuaded that if we had possessed the foresight and acumen to select competent counsel we would never have been convicted. Little can be expected of pettifoggers, and their clients are rarely disappointed. But the average citizen in Chicago has little opportunity to judge of the competency or ability of attorneys. In the smaller cities and towns it is different. There the citizen knows the result of every case that every member of

the bar ever had, and every one of them is judged by the community at their true worth, for their judgment is based upon an open record. In the great cities few lawyers are ever heard of unless they are either extraordinary personages or notorious characters. So the average citizen in selecting counsel has just about as much of an opportunity to select counsel intelligently as if he had selected their names from a hatful while blindfolded. It is like a leap in the dark. You know the result after you have landed.

After our conviction we were granted a stay, and after this had elapsed we were granted further stays, and then the stay ran out and nothing was done for weeks. Finally we were sentenced. Then began the fight to save us from life imprisonment. In my case several applications for a writ of habeas corpus were made before different judges, only to be denied, because my lawyers did not set up proper and available facts. However, I finally obtained the services of an able colored lawyer by the name of Anderson, who knew his business thoroughly, and fortunately our application was made before one of the ablest and fairest judges who ever served the people of Cook County in that capacity, a man universally beloved by the people of this city, county,

and state, and now honored as the chief executive of the state, Edward F. Dunne, and may he live long and prosper.

Upon our application for the writ he ordered my production in court upon the following day, and served notice upon the state's attorney to appear and defend. A postponement, however, resulted, and the matter did not come up for hearing for three days thereafter. At that time my counsel presented the propositions with force and much ability, and the state's attorney was unable to produce any authorities in point which refuted the position taken by my counsel, and Judge Dunne ordered my discharge from further custody.

Thus was a man lifted from the very depths of despair to the heights almost of heaven. From prison to the enjoyment of the sweets of liberty and freedom is a long journey. I have often wondered if Judge Dunne ever realized the smallest fraction of the gratitude which filled my heart, and the deep appreciation with which I have always remembered his action. It is true that it was but an act of justice which ought to characterize the action of every judge upon the bench, but experience teaches us that it does not. I venture to say that there were very few of

them who would have had the sturdy manhood to liberate me when they knew the gauntlet of criticism which they would have to run from the highbrows who had succeeded after so many years of effort in landing me in durance vile. But like that other great commoner, John P. Altgeld, he did not seem to care a straw about their criticism or praise. He did his duty and let that suffice for all the rest. He has not been forgotten, and his record will live in years to come to guide the pathway of others who may not possess his noble and fearless traits, and will need the inspiration of his record to hold them fast and true to the right course.

My friends attended this hearing by the hundreds, filling the court room and the corridors of the building to overflowing. After the decision of Judge Dunne they crowded round me and carried me out of the room, and I was only rescued by the sheriff, to whose office I was obliged to go to carry out certain necessary formalities. They followed me there, filled that office, and finally became so numerous that the doors were locked and barred to them. It was a great demonstration, and I shall never forget the sympathy and earnest concern of these friends who had faith in my cause and stood faithfully



behind me in those dark days. Those were the days that tried men's souls and tested the real qualities of friendship.

Immediately thereafter the state's attorney had my friends, McManners and Hulkey, brought into court and liberated, not wishing to undergo any further repetition of the crushing defeat which they had received in my case at the hands of Judge Dunne. Perhaps they thought also that since the man they were really after had escaped their trap, that they might just as well liberate his lieutenants, against whom they had no real animus. All their venom was used on me.

During my imprisonment my wife died on the District, and I was unable to be at her bedside, but was permitted to attend her funeral. This was the saddest and keenest sorrow that the machinations of these millionaires ever inflicted upon me. Retribution has already come to many of them and their families. Disaster has overtaken many of them, and death has claimed others wholly unprepared for its visitation. My wife did not die of any disease, she died of a broken heart, and these millionaires were as truly her murderers as though they had stabbed her to the heart with as many dagger thrusts as the murderers of Caesar inflicted upon him.



She thought there was no hope for my liberation, and that my life and her own was a closed book, and feeling thus she had no wish to live longer. Was any love ever greater than this? I have never heard of love that surpassed it. If there had been only the least little ray of hope she would have survived, but she could not discern even the faintest, and life died within her. In the hour of my liberation my thoughts were of her, and my inward wish and prayer was that she could have lived to witness it. It would have been a greater joy to her than it was to me, and I shall not attempt to minimize the exhilaration and joy which surged through me when Judge Dunne said the words which set me free from an unjust bondage which seemed eternal.

While I was thus deprived of liberty, my interests in the district were protected by my wife's niece and her husband, Nonie Hollst and Herman Hollst, who resided continuously on the district, and attended my wife in her last days. I had other friends and agents also who assisted them in caring for my interests, although some depredations were committed in my absence. After my release I was on the district almost every day looking after my affairs in person as well as by agents.

After a time I built a commodious brick building upon the premises, and have ever since resided therein with my family, having married an estimable lady from Indiana in April, 1906. Her maiden name was Elma Lockwood. Her father was a famous lawyer, and had often given me advice in former years. I was extremely fortunate in this union to obtain a companion blessed with indomitable courage and fighting blood.

Considerable fuss was made in certain quarters at the time I moved into my new building, but it was a tame affair compared with the old-time encounters. My friends rallied about me in great numbers and gave me a rousing house-warming party. The police were, of course, still hostile, but this time they apparently had no orders from on high, and did not cause much trouble. Perhaps they had been instructed to use bluff and bluster, but to go no further. I have no doubt that they were told the courts of law are the only arbiters of title to real estate, and that they cannot interfere between contesting parties and attempt to decide the matter themselves and thereupon eject the party they believe to be an unworthy claimant.

Our days have consequently been more peaceful in recent years, although we are always pre-

pared to defend our rights. Trespassers are driven off the premises almost daily; unwarranted signs of realty dealers are torn down and used for kindling the morning fires; and the persons nailing them on fences and buildings are driven away whenever seen. I have also prevented the fencing of all lots to which I now claim title, with a few exceptions. I have rented and sold many lots, and have exercised sole dominion and authority continuously over the district against all comers—against the whole world.

Recently one little action has been commenced in a civil court to test the ownership in reality to the two lots upon which my house is now standing, but it was brought under the subterfuge name of an action to partition this real estate between persons who pretend to be the real owners of this realty, and who pretended in their petition to be unaware of the exact nature of my possession, which fact they however admitted, and made my wife and me parties thereto, and asked that we be required to appear and set up whatever claim we might have to said lots or suffer default. It is needless to say that we have appeared and by our answer and cross-bill given them the warmest reception that they have ever experienced. It has been a surprise party to them.

I shall not attempt to weary the reader with the details of these pleadings. In my cross-bill I have fully set out the conspiracy which was concocted years ago to rob me of my possession and lands, and the conspiracy which is now being conducted in the management and manipulation of this suit by the parties and lawyers in charge thereof.

In due time this case will be tried on its merits, and the facts elicited before a jury of our peers, who I feel confident will do justice to me and mine. If they will not do justice to one who has in years gone by, in the darkest hour of our nation's history, shouldered a musket to defend their firesides, and the glorious institutions and principles of our forefathers, then to whom will they do justice? Let their finding of facts make answer, and the Court will adjudge accordingly. I am confident of ultimate victory, for my cause is founded in justice and equity. Why should I not prevail?











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